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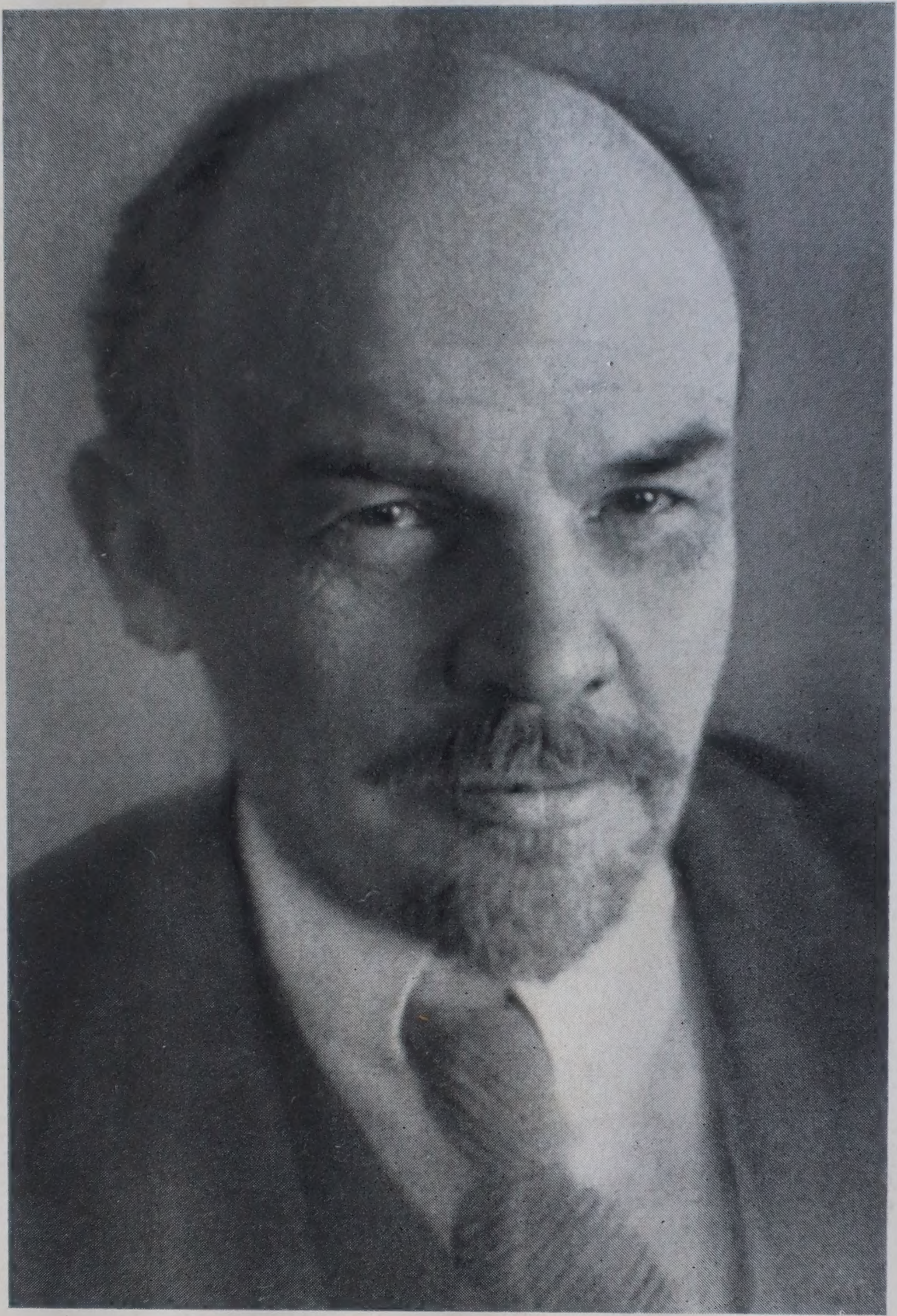

В. Ульянов (Ленин)

On Britain

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

Lenin

On Britain

Progress Publishers • Moscow

Compiled by *C. LEITEISEN*

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present book contains articles by V. I. Lenin that deal with the British working-class movement, and also works that characterise British imperialism, expose its colonial policy, and the part it played in preparing the First World War and in organising armed intervention against Soviet Russia in 1918-20. It also contains extracts from or chapters of Lenin's larger works dealing with various aspects of the political life and economy of Great Britain.

The entire material is arranged in chronological order.

The translations have been taken from V. I. Lenin's *Collected Works* in 45 volumes prepared by Progress Publishers, Moscow.

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From A CHARACTERISATION OF ECONOMIC ROMANTICISM[1]

Chapter II

THE CHARACTER OF THE ROMANTICISTS' CRITICISM OF CAPITALISM

VI

CORN TARIFFS IN ENGLAND AS APPRAISED BY ROMANTICISM AND BY SCIENTIFIC THEORY

We shall supplement our comparison between the theory of the romanticism on the main points of contemporary economics and the modern theory[2] with a comparison between their treatment of a certain *practical* problem. Such a comparison will be all the more interesting because, on the one hand, this practical problem is one of the biggest, most fundamental problems of capitalism, and on the other hand, because the two most outstanding exponents of these hostile theories have expressed their opinion on this subject.

We are referring to the *Corn Laws* in England and their repeal.[3] In the second quarter of the present century this problem deeply interested not only English but also Continental economists; they all realised that this was by no means a specific problem relating to tariff policy, but the general problem of Free Trade, of free competition, of the "destiny of capitalism". It was a matter of crowning the edifice of capitalism by giving full effect to free competition; of clearing the road for the completion of that "break-up" which large-scale machine industry began in England at the end of the last century; of removing the obstacles that were hindering this "break-up" in *agriculture*. It was *in this way* that the two Continental economists of whom we intend to speak viewed the problem.

In the second edition of his *Nouveaux Principes* Sismondi added a chapter specially devoted to "laws governing trade in grain" (I. III, ch. X).

First of all, he emphasises the urgency of the problem: "Half the English people today are demanding the repeal of the Corn Laws, demanding it with extreme irritation against those who support them; but the other half are demanding that they be retained, and cry out indignantly against those who want them repealed" (I, 251).

In examining the problem, Sismondi points out that the interests of the English farmers demanded corn tariffs to ensure them a *remunerating price.** The interests of the manufacturers, however, demanded the repeal of the Corn Laws, because the manufactories could not exist without foreign markets, and the further development of English exports was being retarded by the laws, which restricted imports: "The manufactory owners added that the glut in the market was the result of these same Corn Laws; that wealthy people on the Continent could not buy their goods because they could not find a market for their corn" (I, 254).**

"The opening of the market to foreign corn will probably ruin the English landowners and reduce all rents to an infinitely low price. This, undoubtedly, is a great calamity, but it is not an injustice" (I, 254). And Sismondi proceeds to argue in the naïvest manner that the revenues of the landowners should be commensurate with the service (sic!!) they render "society" (capitalist?), and so forth. "The farmers," continues Sismondi, "will withdraw their capital, or part at least, from agriculture."

This argument of Sismondi's (and he contents himself with this argument) reveals the main flaw in romanticism, which does not pay sufficient attention to the process of economic development that is actually taking place. We have seen that Sismondi himself points to the gradual development and growth of capitalist farming in England. But he hastens to denounce this process instead of studying its causes. It is only this haste, the desire to thrust his innocent wishes upon history, that can explain the fact that Sismondi overlooks the general trend of capitalist development in agriculture and the inevitable *acceleration of this process* with the repeal of the Corn Laws, i.e., the capitalist progress of agriculture instead of its decline, which Sismondi prophesies.

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* These words are in English in the original.—*Ed.*

** One-sided as may be this explanation given by the English manufacturers, who ignore the deeper causes of crises and their inevitability when the expansion of the market is slight, it, nevertheless, undoubtedly contains the absolutely correct idea that the realisation of the product by its sale abroad demands, *on the whole*, corresponding imports from abroad.

We bring this explanation of the English manufacturers to the notice of those economists who brush aside the problem of the realisation of the product in capitalist society with the profound remark: "They will sell abroad."

But Sismondi remains true to himself. He had no sooner approached the contradiction inherent in this capitalist process than he immediately set about naïvely "refuting" it in his endeavour to prove at all costs that the path being followed by the "English fatherland" was a wrong one.

"What will the day labourer do?... Work will stop, the fields will be converted into pastures.... What will become of the 540,000 families who will be denied work?* Even assuming that they will be fit for any kind of industrial work, is there, at the present time, an industry capable of absorbing them?... Can a government be found that will voluntarily subject half the nation it governs to such a crisis?... Will those to whom the agriculturists are thus sacrificed benefit by it to any extent? After all, these agriculturists are the nearest and most reliable consumers of English manufactures. The cessation of their consumption would strike industry a blow more fatal than the closing of one of the biggest foreign markets" (255-56). The notorious "shrinking of the home market" appears upon the scene. "How much will the manufactories lose by the cessation of the consumption of the whole class of English agriculturists, who constitute nearly half the nation? How much will the manufactories lose by the cessation of the consumption of wealthy people, whose revenues from agriculture will be almost wiped out?" (267). The romanticist moves heaven and earth to prove to the manufacturers that the contradictions inherent in the development of their industry, and of their wealth, merely express their error, their shortsightedness. And to "convince" the manufacturers of the "danger" of capitalism, Sismondi dilates on the threatening competition of Polish and Russian grain (pp. 257-61). He resorts to every possible argument; he even wants to touch the pride of Englishmen. "What will become of England's honour if the Emperor of Russia is in a position, whenever he wishes, to obtain some concession or other from her, to starve her by closing the Baltic ports?" (268). Let the reader recall how Sismondi tried to prove that the "apologists of the money power" were wrong, by contending that it was quite easy to cheat when selling.... Sismondi wants to "refute" the theoretical interpreters of capitalist farming by arguing that the rich farmers cannot withstand the competition of the wretched peasants (quoted above), and in the end arrives at his favourite conclusion, evidently convinced that he has proved that the path being followed by the "English fatherland" is a "wrong one". "The example of England shows us that this practice" (the development of money economy, to which Sismondi contrasts *l'habitude de se fournir soi-même*, "the habit of providing for oneself") "is not without its dangers" (263). "The very system of economy" (namely, capitalist farming) "is bad, rests on a dangerous foundation, and this is what one should try to change" (266).

---

* To "prove" the unsoundness of capitalism, Sismondi forthwith makes an approximate calculation (such as our Russian romanticist, Mr. V.V., for example, is so fond of doing). Six hundred thousand families, he says, are engaged in agriculture. When the fields are converted into pastures, no more than a tenth of this number will be "wanted". ...The less the understanding of the process in all its complexity shown by this author, the more eagerly he resorts to childish "rule of thumb" calculations.

The concrete problem evoked by the conflict of definite interests in a definite system of economy is thus submerged in a flood of innocent wishes! But the interested parties themselves raised the issue so sharply that to confine oneself to such a "solution" (as romanticism does on all other problems) became utterly impossible.

"But what is to be done?" Sismondi asks in despair. "Open England's ports, or close them? Doom the manufacturing or the rural workers of England to starvation and death? It is, indeed, a dreadful question; the position in which the English Cabinet finds itself is one of the most delicate that statesmen can possibly face" (260). And Sismondi again and again reverts to the "general conclusion" that the system of capitalist farming is "dangerous", that it is "dangerous to subordinate the whole of agriculture to a system of speculation". But "how it is possible, in England, to take measures, effective but at the same time gradual. such as would raise the significance (remettraient en honneur) of the small farms, when one half of the nation, employed in the manufactories, is suffering hunger and the measures they demand doom the other half of the nation, engaged in agriculture, to starvation—I do not know. I think the Corn Laws should be considerably amended; but I advise those who are demanding their complete repeal to study the following problems carefully" (267)—then follow the old complaints and apprehensions about the decline of agriculture-the shrinking of the home market, and so forth.

Thus, at the very first impact with reality, romanticism suffered utter fiasco. It was obliged to issue to itself a testimonium paupertatis and itself acknowledge receipt of it. Recall how easily and simply romanticism "solved" all problems in "theory"! Protection is unwise, capitalism is a fatal blunder, the road England has taken is wrong and dangerous, production must keep in step with consumption, while industry and commerce must keep in step with agriculture, machines are advantageous only when they lead to a rise in wages or to a reduction of the working day, means of production should not be alienated from the producer, exchange must not run ahead of production, must not lead to speculation, and so on, and so forth. Romanticism countered every contradiction with an appropriate sentimental phrase, answered every question with an appropriate innocent wish, and called the sticking of these labels upon all the facts of current life a "solution" to the problems. It is not surprising that these solutions were so charmingly simple and easy: they ignored only one little circumstance—the real interests, the conflict of which constituted the contradiction. And when the development of this contradiction brought the romanticist face to face with one of these particularly violent conflicts, such as was the struggle between the parties in England that preceded the repeal of the Corn Laws, our romanticist lost his head altogether. He felt perfectly at ease in the haze of dreams and good wishes, he so skilfully composed maxims applicable to "society" in general (but inapplicable to any historically determined system of society); but when he dropped from his world of fantasy into the maelstrom of real life and conflict of interests, he did not even have a criterion of how concrete problems are to be solved. The habit of advancing abstract propositions and of reaching abstract solutions reduced the problem to the bare formula: which part of the population should be ruined—the agricultural or the manufacturing? And, of course, the romanticist could not but conclude that neither part should be ruined, that it was necessary to "turn from the path"... but the real contradictions encompassed him so tightly that he was unable to ascend again into the haze of good wishes, and the romanticist was obliged *to give an answer*. Sismondi even gave two answers: first—"I do not know"; second—"On the one hand, it cannot but be recognised; on the other hand, it must be admitted."

On January 9, 1848, Karl Marx delivered a "speech on Free Trade"* at a public meeting in Brussels. Unlike the romanticists, who declared that "political economy is not a science of calculation, but a science of morality", he took as the point of departure of his exposition precisely the plain and sober *calculation of interests*. Instead of regarding the problem of the Corn Laws as one concerning a "system" chosen by a nation or as one of legislation (as Sismondi looked upon it), the speaker began by presenting it as a conflict of interests between manufacturers and landowners, and showed how the English manufacturers tried to raise the issue as the affair of the entire nation, tried to assure the workers that they were acting in the interests of the national welfare. Unlike the romanticists, who had presented the problem in the shape of the considerations which a legislator must have in mind when carrying out the reform, the speaker reduced the problem to the conflict between the real interests of the different classes of English society. He showed that the entire problem sprang from the necessity of cheapening raw materials for the manufacturers. He described the distrust of the English workers who regarded "these self-sacrificing gentlemen, Bowring, Bright and their colleagues, as their worst enemies...."

"The manufacturers build great palaces at immense expense, in which the *Anti-Corn-Law League* takes up, in some respects, its official residence; they send an army of missionaries to all corners of England to preach the gospel of Free Trade; they have printed and distributed gratis thousands of pamphlets to enlighten the worker upon his own interests, they spend enormous sums to make the press favourable to their cause; they organise a vast administrative system for the conduct of the Free Trade movement, and they display all their wealth of eloquence at public meetings. It was at one of these meetings that a worker cried out: 'If the landlords were to sell our bones, you manufacturers would be the first to buy them in order to put them through a steam-mill and make flour of them.' The English workers have very well understood the significance of the struggle between the landlords and the industrial capitalists. They know very well that the price of bread was to be reduced in order to reduce wages, and that industrial profit would rise by as much as rent fell."

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* "*Discours sur le libre—échange*."[4] We are using the German translation: "*Rede über die Frage des Freihandels*."

Thus the very *presentation of the problem* is quite different from that of Sismondi. The aims the speaker set himself were, firstly, to explain the attitude of the different classes of English society towards the problem from the angle of their interests; and secondly, to throw light on the significance of the reform in the general evolution of the English social economy.

The speaker's views on this last point coincide with those of Sismondi in that he, too, does not see in this a particular problem, but the *general one* of the development of capitalism in general, of "Free Trade" as a system. "The repeal of the Corn Laws in England is the greatest triumph of Free Trade in the nineteenth century."[5] "...By the repeal of the Corn Laws, free competition, the present social economy is carried to its extreme point."* Hence, the issue presents itself to these authors as a question of whether *the further development of capitalism is desirable* or should be retarded, whether "different paths" should be sought, and so forth. And we know that their affirmative answer to this question was indeed the solution of the general fundamental problem of the "destiny of capitalism" and not of the specific problem of the Corn Laws in England, for the point of view established here was also applied much later in relation to other countries. The authors held such views in the 1840s in relation to Germany, and in relation to America,* and declared that free competition was progressive for that country; with respect to Germany one of them wrote, as late as the sixties, that she suffered not only from capitalism, but also from the insufficient development of capitalism.

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* *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* (1845).[6] This work was written from exactly the same point of view *before* the repeal of the Corn Laws (1846), whereas the speech dealt with in the text was delivered *after* they were repealed. But the difference in time is of no importance to us: it is sufficient to compare the above-quoted arguments of Sismondi, advanced in 1827, with this speech of 1848, to see the complete identity of the *elements of the problem* in the case of both authors. The idea of comparing Sismondi with a later German economist was borrowed by us from *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, B.V., Art. "Sismondi" von Lippert, Seite 679. The parallel he drew was of such thrilling interest that Mr. Lippert's exposition at once lost all its woodenness ... that is to say, "objectivity", and became interesting, vivacious, and even fervid.

Let us return to the speech we have been dealing with. We pointed to the fundamentally different point of view of the speaker, who reduced the problem to one of the interests of the different classes in English society. We see the same profound difference in his presentation of the purely theoretical problem of the significance of the repeal of the Corn Laws to the social economy. For him it is not the abstract question of which *system* England should adopt, what path she should choose (as the question is put by Sismondi, who forgets that England has a past and a present, which already determine that path). No, he forthwith presents the question on the basis of the *present-day social and economic system*; he asks himself: what *must be the next step* in the development of this system following the repeal of the Corn Laws?

The difficulty involved in this question was that of determining how the repeal of the Corn Laws would affect *agriculture*, for as regards industry its effect was clear to everybody.

To prove that this repeal would benefit agriculture as well, the *Anti-Corn-Law League*** offered a prize for the three best essays on the beneficial effect the repeal of the Corn Laws would have upon English agriculture. The speaker briefly outlined the views of the three prize-winners, Hope, Morse, and Greg, and at once singled out the last-named, whose essay most scientifically and most strictly followed the principles laid down by classical political economy.

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* Cf. *Neue Zeit*, the recently discovered articles of Marx in *Westphälisches Dampfboot.*[7]

** These words are in English in the original.—*Ed.*

Writing mainly for big farmers, Greg, himself a big manufacturer, showed that the repeal of the Corn Laws would thrust the small farmers out of agriculture and they would turn to industry, but it would benefit the big farmers who would be able to rent land on longer leases, invest more capital in the land, employ more machines and get along with less labour, which was bound to become cheaper with the fall in the price of corn. The landlords, however, would have to be content with a lower rent because land of poorer quality would drop out of cultivation, as it would be unable to withstand the competition of cheap imported grain.

The speaker proved to be quite right in regarding this forecast and this open defence of capitalism in agriculture as the most scientific. History has confirmed this forecast. "The repeal of the Corn Laws gave a marvellous impulse to English agriculture.... A positive decrease of the agricultural population went hand in hand with increase of the area under cultivation, with more intensive cultivation, unheard-of accumulation of the capital incorporated with the soil, and devoted to its working, an augmentation in the products of the soil without parallel in the history of English agriculture, plethoric rent-rolls of landlords, and growing wealth of the capitalist farmers.... Greater outlay of capital per acre, and, as a consequence, more rapid concentration of farms, were essential conditions of the new method."*

But the speaker, of course, did not confine himself to recognising Greg's arguments as being the most correct.

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* This was written in 1867.[8] To explain the rise in rents, one must bear in mind the law established by the modern analysis of differential rent, namely, that *a rise in rent is possible simultaneously with a reduction in the price of corn.* "When the English corn duties were abolished in 1846, the English manufacturers believed that they had thereby turned the landowning aristocracy into paupers. Instead, they became richer than ever. How did this occur? Very simply. In the first place, the farmers were now compelled by contract to invest £12 per acre annually instead of £8. And, secondly, the landlords, being strongly represented in the Lower House too, granted themselves a large government subsidy for drainage projects and other permanent improvements of their land. Since no total displacement of the poorest soil took place, but rather, at worst, it became employed for other purposes—and mostly only temporarily—rents rose in proportion to the increased investment of capital, and the landed aristocracy consequently was better off than ever before" (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, 259).

Coming from the mouth of Greg, they were the reasoning of a Free Trader who was discussing English agriculture in general, and was trying to prove that the repeal of the Corn Laws would benefit the nation as a whole. After what we have said above it is evident that these were not the views of the speaker.

He explained that a reduction in the price of corn, so glorified by the Free Traders, meant an inevitable reduction in wages, the cheapening of the commodity "labour" (more exactly: labour-power); that the drop in the price of corn would never be able to compensate the workers for the drop in wages, firstly, because with the drop in the price of corn it would be more difficult for the worker to save on the consumption of bread with a view to buying other articles; secondly, because the progress of industry cheapens articles of consumption, substituting spirits for beer, potatoes for bread, cotton for wool and linen, and, by all this, lowering the worker's standard of requirements and living.

Thus we see that *apparently* the speaker establishes the elements of the problem just as Sismondi does: he *too* admits that the ruination of the small farmers and the impoverishment of the workers in industry and agriculture will be the inevitable consequences of Free Trade. It is here that our Narodniks, who are also distinguished for their inimitable skill in "citing", usually stop quoting "excerpts", and with complete satisfaction declare that they fully "agree". But these methods merely show that they do not understand, firstly, the tremendous difference in the presentation of the problem, which we indicated above; secondly, they overlooked the fact that *it is only here* that the radical difference between the new theory and romanticism *begins*: the romanticist turns from the concrete problems of actual development to dreams, whereas the realist takes the established facts as his criterion in definitely solving the concrete problem.

Pointing to the forthcoming improvement in the conditions of the workers the speaker went on to say:

"Thereupon the economists will tell you:

"'Well, we admit that competition among the workers, which will certainly not have diminished under Free Trade, will very soon bring wages into harmony with the low price of commodities. But, on the other hand, the low price of commodities will increase consumption, the larger consumption will require increased production, which will be followed by a larger demand for hands, and this larger demand for hands will be followed by a rise in wages.'

"The whole line of argument amounts to this: *Free Trade increases productive forces.* If industry keeps growing, if wealth, if the productive power, if, in a word, productive capital increases the demand for labour, the price of labour, and consequently the rate of wages, rise also. *The most favourable condition for the worker is the growth of capital. This must be admitted.** If capital remains stationary, industry will not merely remain stationary but will decline, and in this case the worker will be the first victim. He goes to the wall before the capitalist. And in the case where capital keeps growing, in the circumstances which we have said are the *best* for the worker, what will be his lot? He will go to the wall just the same...." And quoting data given by English economists the speaker went on to explain in detail how the concentration of capital increases the division of labour, which cheapens labour-power by substituting unskilled for skilled labour, how the machines oust the workers, how big capital ruins the small industrialists and small rentiers and leads to the intensification of crises, which still further increase the number of unemployed. The conclusion he drew from his analysis was that Free Trade signifies nothing but freedom for the development of capital.

Thus, the speaker was able to find a criterion for the solution of the problem which at first sight seemed to lead to the hopeless dilemma that brought Sismondi to a halt: both Free Trade and its restraint equally lead to the ruin of the workers. *The criterion is the development of the productive forces.* It was immediately evident that the problem was treated from the historical angle: instead of comparing capitalism with some abstract society as it should be (i.e., fundamentally with a utopia), the author compared it with the *preceding stages* of social economy, compared the different stages of capitalism as they successively replaced one another, *and established the fact that the productive forces of society develop thanks to the development of capitalism.* By applying scientific criticism to the arguments of the Free Traders he was able to avoid the mistake usually made by the romanticists who, denying that the arguments have any importance, "throw out the baby with the bath water"; he was able to pick out their sound kernel, i.e., the undoubted fact of enormous technical progress. Our Narodniks, with their characteristic wit, would, of course, have concluded that this author, who had so openly taken *the side of big capital against the small producer*, was an "apologist of money power", the more so that he was addressing continental Europe and applying the conclusions he drew from English life to his own country, where at that time large-scale machine industry was only taking its first timid steps. And yet, precisely this example (like a host of similar examples from West-European history) could help them study the thing they are not at all able to understand (perhaps they do not wish to do so?), namely, that to admit that big capital is progressive as compared with small production, is very, very far from being "apologetics".

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* Our italics.

It is sufficient to recall the above-quoted chapter from Sismondi and this speech to be convinced that the latter is superior both from the standpoint of theory and of hostility towards every kind of "apologetics". The speaker described the contradictions that accompany the development of big capital much more exactly, fully, straightforwardly and frankly than the romanticists ever did. But he never descended to uttering a single sentimental phrase bewailing this development. He never uttered a word anywhere about a possibility of "diversion from the path". He understood that by means of such phrases people merely cover up the fact that they themselves are "diverting" from the problem reality confronts them with, i.e., a certain economic reality, a certain economic development and certain interests that spring from this development.

The above-mentioned fully scientific criterion enabled him to solve this problem while remaining a consistent realist.

"Do not imagine, gentlemen," said the speaker, "that in criticising freedom of trade we have the least intention of defending the system of protection." And he went on to point out that under the contemporary system of social economy both Free Trade and protection rested on the same basis, briefly referred to the "breaking-up" process of the old economic life and of the old semi-patriarchal relationships in West-European countries carried through by capitalism in England and on the Continent, and indicated the social fact that under certain conditions Free Trade *hastens* this "break-up".* And he concluded with the words: "It is in this sense alone, gentlemen, that I vote in favour of Free Trade."[9]

Written in the spring of 1897
First published in the magazine
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April-July 1897

Collected Works, Vol. 2,
pp. 252-65

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* This progressive significance of the repeal of the Corn Laws was also clearly indicated by the author of "Die Lage" *even before the repeal took place* (loc. cit., p. 179) and he specially stressed the influence it would have upon the consciousness of the producers.

From THE TASKS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

The proletariat alone can be the *vanguard fighter* for political liberty and for democratic institutions. Firstly, this is because political tyranny bears most heavily upon the proletariat whose position gives it no opportunity to secure a modification of that tyranny—it has no access to the higher authorities, not even to the officials, and it has no influence on public opinion. Secondly, the proletariat alone is capable of bringing about the *complete* democratisation of the political and social system, since this would place the system in the hands of the workers. That is why the *merging* of the democratic activities of the working class with the democratic aspirations of other classes and groups would *weaken* the democratic movement, would *weaken* the political struggle, would make it less determined, less consistent, more likely to compromise. On the other hand, if the working class *stands out* as the vanguard fighter for democratic institutions, this will *strengthen* the democratic movement, will *strengthen* the struggle for political liberty, because the working class will *spur on* all the other democratic and political opposition elements, will push the liberals towards the political radicals, will push the radicals towards an irrevocable rupture with the whole of the political and social structure of present society. We said above that all *socialists* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats.* We now add: all true and consistent *democrats* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats.*

We will illustrate what we mean by quoting the following example. Take the civil service, the bureaucracy, as representing a special category of persons who specialise in the work of administration and occupy a privileged position as compared with the people. We see this institution everywhere, from autocratic and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured, free and civilised England, as an essential organ of bourgeois society. The *complete lack of rights* of the people in relation to government officials and the *complete* absence of control over the privileged bureaucracy correspond to the backwardness of Russia and to its absolutism. In England powerful popular control is exercised over the administration, but even there that control *is far from being complete*, even there the bureaucracy retains not a few of its privileges, and not infrequently is the master and not the servant of the people. Even in England we see that powerful social groups support the privileged position of the bureaucracy and hinder the complete democratisation of that institution. Why? Because it is in the interests of the proletariat alone to democratise it *completely*; the most progressive strata of the bourgeoisie defend certain prerogatives of the bureaucracy and are opposed to the election of all officials, opposed to the complete abolition of electoral qualifications, opposed to making officials directly responsible to the people, etc., because these strata realise that the proletariat will take advantage of such complete democratisation in order to use it *against* the bourgeoisie. This is the case in Russia, too. Many and most diverse strata of the Russian people are opposed to the omnipotent, irresponsible, corrupt, savage, ignorant and parasitic Russian bureaucracy. But except for the proletariat, *not one* of these strata would agree to the complete democratisation of the bureaucracy, because all these strata (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, the "intelligentsia" in general) have some ties with the bureaucracy, because all these strata are *kith and kin* of the Russian bureaucracy. Who does not know how easy it is in Holy Russia for a radical intellectual, or socialist intellectual, to turn into an official of the Imperial Government, an official who takes comfort from the thought that he does "good" within the limits of office routine, an official who pleads this "good" in justification of his political indifference, his servility towards the government of the knout and the whip? *The proletariat* alone is unreservedly hostile to the autocracy and the Russian bureaucracy, *the proletariat* alone has no *ties* with these organs of aristocratic-bourgeois society and the proletariat alone is capable of irreconcilable hostility towards them and of waging a determined struggle against them.

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First published in pamphlet
form in Geneva, 1898

Collected Works, Vol. 2,
pp. 336-37

REVIEW

J. A. Hobson. ***The Evolution of Modern Capitalism.***
Translated from the English.
St. Petersburg, 1898. Publ. O. N. Popova.
Price 1 rb. 50 kop.

Hobson's book is, strictly speaking, not a study of the evolution of modern capitalism, but a series of sketches, based mainly on English data, dealing with the most recent industrial development. Hence, the title of the book is somewhat broad: the author does not touch upon agriculture at all and his examination of industrial economics is far from complete. Like the well-known writers Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Hobson is a representative of one of the advanced trends of English social thought. His attitude towards "modern capitalism" is critical; he fully admits the necessity of replacing it by a higher form of social economy and treats the problem of its replacement with typically English reformist practicality. His conviction of the need for reform is, in the main, arrived at empirically, under the influence of the recent history of English factory legislation, of the English labour movement, of the activities of the English municipalities, etc. Hobson lacks well-knit and integral theoretical views that could serve as a basis for his reformist programme and elucidate specific problems of reform. He is, therefore, at his best when he deals with the grouping and description of the latest statistical and economic data. When, on the other hand, he deals with the general theoretical problems of political economy, he proves to be very weak. The Russian reader will even find it strange to see a writer with such extensive knowledge and practical aspirations deserving of full sympathy helplessly labouring over questions like, what is "capital", what is the role of "savings", etc. This weak side of Hobson is fully explained by the fact that he regards John Stuart Mill as a greater authority on political economy than Marx, whom he quotes once or twice but whom he evidently does not understand at all or does not know. One cannot but regret the vast amount of unproductive labour wasted by Hobson in an attempt to get clear on the contradictions of bourgeois and professorial political economy. At best he comes close to the solutions given by Marx long ago; at worst he borrows erroneous views that are in sharp contradiction to his attitude towards "modern capitalism". The most unfortunate chapter in his book is the seventh: "Machinery and Industrial Depression". In this chapter Hobson tried to analyse the theoretical problem of crises, of social capital and revenue in capitalist society, and of capitalist accumulation. Correct ideas on the disproportionateness of production and consumption in capitalist society and on the anarchic character of capitalist economy are submerged in a heap of scholastic arguments about "saving" (Hobson confuses accumulation with "saving"), amidst all sorts of Crusoeisms (suppose "a man working with primitive tools, discovers an implement ... saving food", etc.), and the like. Hobson is very fond of diagrams, and in most cases he used them very ably for graphic illustration of his exposition. But the idea of the "mechanism of production" given in his diagram on page 207 (Chap. VII) can only elicit a smile from the reader who is at all acquainted with the real "mechanism" of *capitalist* "production". Hobson here confuses production with the social system of production and evinces an extremely vague understanding of what capital is, what its component parts are, and into what classes capitalist society is necessarily divided. In Chapter VIII he cites interesting data on the composition of the population according to occupation, and on the changes in this composition in the course of time, but the great flaw in his theoretical arguments on "machinery and the demand for labour" is that he ignores the theory of "capitalist overpopulation" or the reserve army. Among the more happily written chapters of Hobson's book are those in which he examines modern towns and the position of women in modern industry. Citing statistics on the growth of female labour and describing the extremely bad conditions under which this labour is performed, Hobson justly points out that the only "hope of improving these conditions lies in the supplanting of domestic labour by factory labour, which leads to "closer social intercourse" and to "organisation". Similarly, on the question of the significance of towns, Hobson comes close to Marx's general views when he admits that the antithesis between town and country contradicts the system of collectivist society. Hobson's conclusions would have been much more convincing had he not ignored Marx's teaching on this question too. Hobson would then, probably, have emphasised more clearly the historically progressive role of the cities and the necessity of combining agriculture with industry under the collectivist organisation of economy. The last chapter of Hobson's book, "Civilisation and Industrial Development", is perhaps the best. In this chapter the author proves by a number of very apt arguments the need to reform the modern industrial system along the line of expanding "public control" and the "socialisation of industry". In evaluating Hobson's somewhat optimistic views regarding the methods by which these "reforms" can be brought about, the special features of English history and of English life must be borne in mind: the high development of democracy, the absence of militarism, the enormous strength of the organised trade unions, the growing investment of English capital outside of England, which weakens the antagonism between the English employers and workers, etc.

In his well-known book on the social movement in the nineteenth century, Prof. W. Sombart notes among other things a "tendency towards unity" (title of Chapter VI), i.e., a tendency of the social movement of the various countries, in its various forms and shades, towards uniformity and along with it a tendency towards the spread of the ideas of Marxism. In regard to England Sombart sees this tendency in the fact that the English trade unions are increasingly abandoning "the purely Manchester standpoint". In regard to Hobson's book we can say that under pressure of the demands of life, which is increasingly corroborating Marx's "prognosis", progressive English writers are beginning to realise the unsoundness of traditional bourgeois political economy and, freeing themselves from its prejudices, are involuntarily approaching Marxism.

The translation of Hobson's book has substantial shortcomings.

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Collected Works, Vol. 4,
pp. 100-03

From CAPITALISM IN AGRICULTURE

(Kautsky's Book and Mr. Bulgakov's Article)[10]

After demonstrating the technical superiority of large-scale production in agriculture (we shall present Kautsky's arguments in greater detail later on in examining Mr. Bulgakov's objections), Kautsky asks: "What can small production offer against the advantages of large-scale production?" And he replies: "The greater diligence and greater care of the worker, who, unlike the hired labourer, works for himself, and the low level of requirements of the small independent farmer, which is even lower than that of the agricultural labourer" (S. 106); and, by adducing a number of striking facts concerning the position of the peasants in France, England, and Germany, Kautsky leaves no doubt whatever about "overwork and under-consumption in small-scale production". Finally, he points out that the superiority of large-scale production also finds expression in the striving of farmers to form *associations*: "Associated production is large-scale production." The fuss made by the ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie in general, and the Russian Narodniks in particular (e.g., the above-mentioned book by Mr. Kablukov), over the small farmers' associations is well known. The more significant, therefore, is Kautsky's excellent analysis of the role of these associations. Of course, the small farmers' associations are a link in economic progress; but they express *a transition to capitalism* (*Fortschritt zum Kapitalismus*) *and not toward collectivism*, as is often thought and asserted (S. 118). Associations do not diminish but enhance the superiority (*Vorsprung*) of large-scale over small-scale production in agriculture, because the big farmers enjoy greater opportunities of forming associations and take greater advantage of these opportunities. It goes without saying that Kautsky very emphatically maintains that communal, collective large-scale production is superior to capitalist large-scale production. He deals with the experiments in collective farming made in England by the followers of Robert Owen*[11] and with analogous communes in the United States of North America. All these experiments, says Kautsky, *irrefutably prove* that it is quite possible for workers to carry on large-scale modern farming collectively, but that for this possibility to become a reality "a number of definite economic, political, and intellectual conditions" are necessary. The transition of the small producer (both artisan and peasant) to collective production is hindered by the extremely low development of solidarity and discipline, the isolation, and the "property-owner fanaticism", noted not only among West-European peasants, but, let us add, also among the Russian "commune" peasants (recall A. N. Engelhardt and G. Uspensky[12]). Kautsky categorically declares that "it is absurd to expect that the peasant in *modern society* will go over to communal production" (S. 129).

The small peasants, says an investigator of the life of the rural population in Westphalia quoted by Kautsky, overwork their children to such an extent that their physical development is retarded; working for wages has not such bad sides. A small Lincolnshire farmer stated the following to the parliamentary commission which investigated agrarian conditions in England (1897): "I have brought up a family and nearly worked them to death." Another said: "I and my children have been working eighteen hours a day for several days and average ten to twelve during the year." A third: "We work much harder than labourers, in fact, like slaves." Mr. Read described to the same commission the conditions of the small farmer, in the districts where agriculture in the strict sense of the word predominates, in the following manner: "The only way in which he can possibly succeed is this, in doing the work of two agricultural labourers and living at the expense of one ... as regards his family, they are worse educated and harder worked than the children of the agricultural labourers" (Royal Commission on Agriculture, Final Report, pp. 34, 358. Quoted by Kautsky, S. 109). Will Mr. Bulgakov assert that not less frequently a day labourer does the work of two peasants? Particularly characteristic is the following fact cited by Kautsky showing that "the peasant art of starvation (*Hungerkunst*) may lead to the economic superiority of small production": a comparison of the profitableness of two peasant farms in Baden shows a deficit of 933 marks in one, *the large one*, and a surplus of 191 marks in the other, which was *only half the size* of the first. But the first farm, which was conducted exclusively with the aid of hired labourers, had to feed the latter properly, at a cost of nearly one mark (about 45 kopeks) per person per day; whereas the smaller farm was conducted exclusively with the aid of the members of the family (the wife and six grown-up children), whose maintenance *cost only half the amount* spent on the day labourers: 48 pfennigs per person per day. If the family of the small peasant had been fed as well as the labourers hired by the big farmer, the small farmer would have suffered a deficit of 1,250 marks! "His surplus came, not from his full corn bins, but from his empty stomach." What a huge number of similar examples would be discovered, were the comparison of the "profitableness" of large and small farms accompanied by calculation of the consumption and work of peasants and wage-workers.* Here is another calculation of the higher profit of a small farm (4.6 hectares) as compared with a big farm (26.5 hectares), a calculation made in one of the special magazines. But how is this higher profit obtained?—asks Kautsky. It turns out that the small farmer is assisted by his children, assisted from the time they begin to walk; whereas the big farmer has to spend money on his children (school, *gymnasium*). In the small farm even the old people, over 70 years of age, "take the place of a full worker". "An ordinary day labourer, particularly on a big farm, goes about his work, and thinks to himself: 'I wish it was knocking-off time.' The small peasant, however, at all events in all the busy seasons, thinks to himself: 'Oh, if only the day were an hour or two longer.'" The small producers, the author of this article in the agricultural magazine says didactically, make better use of their time in the busy seasons: "They rise earlier, retire later and work more quickly, whereas the labourers employed by the big farmer do not want to get up earlier, go to bed later or work harder than at other times." The peasant is able to obtain a net income thanks to the "simple" life he leads: he lives in a mud hut built mainly by the labour of his family; his wife has been married for 17 years and has worn out only one pair of shoes; usually she goes barefoot, or in wooden sabots; and she makes all the clothes for her family. Their food consists of potatoes, milk, and on rare occasions, herring. Only on Sundays does the husband smoke a pipe of tobacco. "These people did not realise that they were leading a particularly simple life and did not express dissatisfaction with their position.... Following this simple way of life, they obtained nearly every year a small surplus from their farm."

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* On pages 124-26 Kautsky describes the agricultural commune in Ralahine, of which, incidentally, Mr. Dioneo tells his Russian readers in *Russkoye Bogatstvo* No. 2, for this year.

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* Cf. V. Ilyin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, pp. 112, 175, 201.[13]

Written between April 4 (16) and May 9 (21), 1899
Published in January-February 1900 in the magazine *Zhizn*

Collected Works, Vol. 4, pp. 120-22, 129-31

From WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognises, *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, *but three*, *placing the theoretical struggle on a par with the first two*. His recommendations to the German working-class movement, which had become strong, practically and politically, are so instructive from the standpoint of present-day problems and controversies, that we hope the reader will not be vexed with us for quoting a long passage from his prefatory note to *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*,* which has long become a great bibliographical rarity:

"The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; and they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called 'educated' classes of Germany have almost completely lost. Without German philosophy, which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific socialism—the only scientific socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scientific socialism would never have entered their flesh and blood as much as is the case. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the English working-class movement crawls along so slowly in spite of the splendid organisation of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism,[14] in its original form, among the French and Belgians, and, in the form further caricatured by Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.

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* Dritter Abdruck. Leipzig, 1875. Verlag der Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei. (*The Peasant War in Germany*. Third impression. Co-operative Publishers, Leipzig, 1875.—*Ed.*)

"The second advantage is that, chronologically speaking, the Germans were about the last to come into the workers' movement. Just as German theoretical socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen—three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and all their utopianism, have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things, the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us—so the practical workers' movement in Germany ought never to forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilise their dearly bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the precedent of the English trade unions and French workers' political struggles, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?

"It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers' movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted pursuant to its three sides—the theoretical, the political, and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalists)—in harmony and in its interconnections, and in a systematic way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack, that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

"Due to this advantageous situation, on the one hand, and to the insular peculiarities of the English and the forcible suppression of the French movement, on the other, the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But let us hope that as long as they occupy it, they will fill it fittingly. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. In particular, it will be the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, i.e., that it be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever more clarified understanding thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organisation both of the party and of the trade unions....

"If the German workers progress in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any particular country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line; and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events demand of them increased courage, increased determination and energy."[15]

Engels' words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly grave trials in the form of the Exceptional Law Against the Socialists.[16] And they met those trials armed for battle and succeeded in emerging from them victorious.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably graver; it will have to fight a monster compared with which an anti-socialist law in a constitutional country seems but a dwarf. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks confronting the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we have the right to count upon acquiring this honourable title, already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement, which is a thousand times broader and deeper, with the same devoted determination and vigour.

What concrete, real meaning attaches to Martynov's[17] words when he sets before Social-Democracy the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"? The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers against their employers for better terms *in the sale of their labour-power*, for better living and working conditions. This struggle is necessarily a trade-union struggle, because working conditions differ greatly in different trades, and, consequently, the struggle *to improve* them can only be conducted on the basis of trade organisations (in the Western countries, through trade unions; in Russia, through temporary trade associations and through leaflets, etc.). Lending "the economic struggle itself a political character" means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction of these trade demands, the improvement of working conditions in each separate trade by means of "legislative and administrative measures" (as Martynov puts it on the ensuing page of his article, p. 43). This is precisely what all workers' trade unions do and always have done. Read the works of the soundly scientific (and "soundly" opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will see that the British trade unions long ago recognised, and have long been carrying out, the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all legal hindrances to the co-operative and trade-union movements, for laws to protect women and children, for the improvement of labour conditions by means of health and factory legislation, etc.

Thus, the pompous phrase about "lending the economic struggle *itself* a political character", which sounds so "terrifically" profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving *to degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade-union politics. Under the guise of rectifying the one-sidedness of *Iskra*,[18] which, it is alleged, places "the revolutionising of dogma higher than the revolutionising of life",* we are presented with the *struggle for economic reforms* as if it were something entirely new. In point of fact, the phrase "lending the economic struggle itself a political character" means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion, had he pondered over the significance of his own words. "Our Party," he says, training his heaviest guns on *Iskra*, "could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, unemployment, famine, etc." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42-43). Concrete demands for measures —does not this mean demands for social reforms? Again we ask the impartial reader: Are we slandering the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (may I be forgiven for this awkward, currently used designation!) by calling them concealed Bernsteinians when, as their point of *disagreement* with *Iskra*, they advance their thesis on the necessity of struggling for economic reforms?

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* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 60. This is the Martynov variation of the application, which we have characterised above, [19] of the thesis "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes" to the present chaotic state of our movement. In fact, this is merely a translation into Russian of the notorious Bernsteinian sentence: "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing."

Revolutionary Social-Democracy has always included the struggle for reforms as part of its activities. But it utilises "economic" agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it ceases to be an autocratic government. Moreover, it considers it its duty to present this demand to the government on the basis, not of the economic struggle *alone*, but of all manifestations in general of public and political life. In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms, as the part to the whole, to the revolutionary struggle for freedom and for socialism. Martynov, however, resuscitates the theory of stages in a new form and strives to prescribe, as it were, an exclusively economic path of development for the political struggle. By advancing at this moment, when the revolutionary movement is on the upgrade, an alleged special "task" of struggling for reforms, he is dragging the party backwards and is playing into the hands of both "Economist" and liberal opportunism.

Let us take the type of Social-Democratic study circle that has become most widespread in the past few years and examine its work. It has "contacts with the workers" and rests content with this, issuing leaflets in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists, and the tyranny of the police are strongly condemned. At workers' meetings the discussions never, or rarely ever, go beyond the limits of these subjects. Extremely rare are the lectures and discussions held on the history of the revolutionary movement, on questions of the government's home and foreign policy, on questions of the economic evolution of Russia and of Europe, on the position of the various classes in modern society, etc. As to systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society, no one even dreams of that. In fact, the ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is something far more in the nature of a trade-union secretary than a socialist political leader. For the secretary of any, say English, trade union always helps the workers to carry on the economic struggle, he helps them to expose factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and of measures that hamper the freedom to strike and to picket (i.e., to warn all and sundry that a strike is proceeding at a certain factory), explains the partiality of arbitration court judges who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade-union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government". It cannot be too strongly maintained that *this is still not* Social-Democracy, that the Social-Democrat's ideal should not be the trade-union secretary, but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. Compare, for example, a leader like Robert Knight (the well-known secretary and leader of the Boiler-Makers' Society, one of the most powerful trade unions in England), with Wilhelm Liebknecht, and try to apply to them the contrasts that Martynov draws in his controversy with *Iskra*. You will see—I am running through Martynov's article—that Robert Knight engaged more in "calling the masses to certain concrete actions" (Martynov, op. cit., p. 39), while Wilhelm Liebknecht engaged more in "the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it" (38-39); that Robert Knight "formulated the immediate demands of the proletariat and indicated the means by which they can be achieved" (41), whereas Wilhelm Liebknecht, while doing this, did not hold back from "simultaneously guiding the activities of various opposition strata", "dictating a positive programme of action for them"* (41); that Robert Knight strove "as far as possible to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" (42) and was excellently able "to submit to the government concrete demands promising certain palpable results" (43), whereas Liebknecht engaged to a much greater degree in "one-sided" "exposures" (40); that Robert Knight attached more significance to the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle" (61), whereas Liebknecht attached more significance to the "propaganda of brilliant and completed ideas" (61); that Liebknecht converted the paper he was directing into "an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposed the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs, insofar as it affected the interests of the most varied strata of the population" (63), whereas Robert Knight "worked for the cause of the working class in close organic connection with the proletarian struggle" (63)—if by "close and organic connection" is meant the subservience to spontaneity which we examined above, by taking the examples of Krichevsky and Martynov—and "restricted the sphere of his influence", convinced, of course, as is Martynov, that "by doing so he deepened that influence" (63). In a word, you will see that *de facto* Martynov reduces Social-Democracy to the level of trade-unionism, though he does so, of course, not because he does not desire the good of Social-Democracy, but simply because he is a little too much in a hurry to render Plekhanov more profound, instead of taking the trouble to understand him.

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pp. 370-73, 404-06, 422-24

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* For example, during the Franco-Prussian War, Liebknecht dictated a programme of action *for the whole of democracy*; to an even greater extent Marx and Engels did this in 1848.

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE[20]

March 23, 1905

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your donation. I have received a cheque for £80 (francs 2,008) and directed £60 (frs 1,506) according to your prescriptions in St. Petersburg to our St. Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. I have received also the second cheque for £90 (the sum not yet received here in francs). £50 will be also sent to aid the widows and orphans of the St. Petersburg (labourers) working men, killed on 9 (22) January.

With kind regards.

Yours very sincerely,

Vl. Oulianoff
(Editor of the *Vperiod*)

3. Rue de la Colline. 3. Genève.
Switzerland.

Sent to London
First published on August 18, 1946
in the journal *British Ally* No. 33
Printed from the original in English

Collected Works, Vol. 36, p. 144

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE

May 20, 1905

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of £25, of which £5 will be subscribed, according Your condition, for relief work. Your subscriptions are all mentioned in our paper *Vperiod* (Forward), which we send to You. Now I send You again the issues of this paper, where the subscriptions are mentioned and I notice these mentions with blue pencil.

We have written already to St. Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party that it is necessary to make a report before some working men meetings about the subscriptions from the L.R.C. All communications with the organisations of our party being secret it must take some time before an answer can be received. This week some Russian comrades go to St. Petersburg and I repeated to them my request. They promised to me to take all measures to accelerate this report in St. Petersburg and to send a notice to You. Your letter from 22.4.05 will also be sent to the St. Petersburg Committee.

I hope, dear Sir, that you will soon receive a letter from our Petersburg comrades stating the report before working men meeting in the Russian capital.

I beg to apologise for my bad English.

With kindest thanks.

Yours very sincerely,
Vl. Oulianoff
(Editor of *Vperiod*)

Vl. Oulianoff,
3. Rue de la Colline. 3.
Genève. Switzerland.

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Collected Works, Vol. 36, p. 147

NOTES ON "THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS"[21]

1

This is how the matter stood: the Taff Vale Railway sued the railway workers' union for losses caused by the strike. Despite bitter resistance by the workers, the bourgeois judges awarded damages to the capitalists! Court injunctions instructing trade unions to compensate the capitalists for losses caused by a strike means in fact destroying the right to strike. Judges who play the lackey to the bourgeoisie know well how to nullify even constitutionally guaranteed liberties, when it comes to the struggle between labour and capital.

2

Unfortunately, the British working-class movement promises to serve for a long time to come as a sad example of how the labour movement's divorcement from socialism leads of necessity to its becoming shallow and bourgeois in character.

Proletary No 23,
October 31 (18), 1905

Collected Works,
Vol. 9, p. 413

PREFACE TO THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION OF LETTERS BY JOHANNES BECKER, JOSEPH DIETZGEN, FREDERICK ENGELS, KARL MARX, AND OTHERS TO FRIEDRICH SORGE AND OTHERS

The collection of letters by Marx, Engels, Dietzgen, Becker and other leaders of the international working-class movement in the last century, here presented to the Russian public, is an indispensable complement to our advanced Marxist literature.

We shall not here dwell in detail on the importance of these letters for the history of socialism and for a comprehensive treatment of the activities of Marx and Engels. This aspect of the matter requires no explanation. We shall only remark that an understanding of the letters published calls for acquaintance with the principal works on the history of the International (see Jaeckh, *The International*, Russian translation in the *Znaniye* edition), and also the history of the German and the American working-class movements (see Franz Mehring, *History of German Social-Democracy*, and Morris Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States*), etc.

Nor do we intend here to attempt to give a general outline of the contents of this correspondence or an appreciation of the various historical periods to which it relates. Mehring has done this extremely well in his article, "Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel" (*Neue Zeit*, 25. Jahrg., Nr. 1 und 2),* which will probably be appended to the present translation by the publisher, or else will be issued as a separate Russian publication.

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* "The Sorge Correspondence", *Neue Zeit*, 25th year, Nos. 1 and 2.—*Ed.*

Of particular interest to Russian socialists in the present revolutionary period are the lessons which the militant proletariat must draw from an acquaintance with the intimate aspects of the activities of Marx and Engels in the course of nearly thirty years (1867-95). It is, therefore, not surprising that the first attempts made in our Social-Democratic literature to acquaint readers with the letters from Marx and Engels to Sorge were also linked up with the "burning" issues of Social-Democratic tactics in the Russian revolution (Plekhanov's *Sovremennaya Zhizn* and the Menshevik *Otkliki*). And we intend to draw our readers' attention particularly to an appreciation of those passages in the published correspondence that are especially important from the viewpoint of the present tasks of the workers' party in Russia.

In their letters, Marx and Engels deal most frequently with the pressing problems of the British, American and German working-class movements. This is natural, because they were Germans who at that time lived in England and corresponded with their American comrade. Marx expressed himself much more frequently and in much greater detail on the French working-class movement, and particularly the Paris Commune, in the letters he wrote to the German Social-Democrat Kugelmann.*

It is highly instructive to compare what Marx and Engels said of the British, American and German working-class movements. Such comparison acquires all the greater importance when we remember that Germany on the one hand, and Britain and America on the other, represent different stages of capitalist development and different forms of domination of the bourgeoisie, as a class, over the entire political life of those countries. From the scientific point of view, we have here a sample of materialist dialectics, the ability to bring to the forefront and stress the various points, the various aspects of the problem, in application to the specific features of different political and economic conditions. From the point of view of the practical policy and tactics of the workers' party, we have here a sample of the way in which the creators of the *Com-*

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* See *Letters of Karl Marx to Dr. Kugelmann*, Russian translation edited by N. Lenin, with a foreword by the editor, St. Petersburg, 1907. (See *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 104-12.—*Ed.*)

munist Manifesto defined the tasks of the fighting proletariat in accordance with the different stages of the national working-class movements in the different countries.

What Marx and Engels criticise most sharply in British and American socialism is its isolation from the working-class movement. The burden of all their numerous comments on the Social-Democratic Federation[22] in Britain and on the American socialists is the accusation that they have reduced Marxism to a dogma, to "rigid [*starre*] orthodoxy", that they consider it "a credo and not a *guide to action*",[23] that they are incapable of adapting themselves to the theoretically helpless, but living and powerful mass working-class movement that is marching alongside them. "Had we from 1864 to 1873 insisted on working together only with those who openly adopted our platform," Engels exclaimed in his letter of January 27, 1887, "where should we be today?" And in the preceding letter (December 28, 1886), he wrote, with reference to the influence of Henry George's ideas on the American working class:

"A million or two of working men's votes next November for a bona fide working men's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinally perfect platform."

These are very interesting passages. There are Social-Democrats in our country who have hastened to utilise them in defence of the idea of a "labour congress" or something in the nature of Larin's "broad labour party"[24]. Why not in defence of a "Left bloc"? we would ask these precipitate "utilisers" of Engels. The letters the quotations are taken from refer to a time when American workers voted at the elections for Henry George. Mrs. Wischnewetzky—an American woman married to a Russian and translator of Engels's works—had asked him, as may be seen from Engels's reply, to give a thorough criticism of Henry George. Engels wrote (December 28, 1886) that *the time had not yet arrived* for that, the main thing being that the workers' party should begin to organise itself, even if not on an entirely pure programme. Later on, the workers would themselves come to understand what was amiss, "would learn from their own mistakes", but "anything that might delay or prevent that national consolidation of the working-men's party—on no matter what platform—I should consider a great mistake...".

It goes without saying that Engels had a perfect understanding, and frequently spoke, of the absurdity and *reactionary character* of Henry George's ideas, from the *socialist* point of view. The Sorge correspondence contains a most interesting letter from Karl Marx dated June 20, 1881, in which he characterised Henry George as an ideologist of *the radical bourgeoisie.* "Theoretically the man is utterly backward" (*total arrière*), wrote Marx. Yet Engels was not afraid to join with this *socialist reactionary* in the elections, so long as there were people who could tell the masses of "the consequences of their own mistakes" (Engels, in the letter dated November 29, 1886).

Regarding the Knights of Labor,[25] an organisation of American workers existing at that time, Engels wrote in the same letter: "The weakest [literally: rottenest, *faulste*] side of the Knights of Labor was their *political neutrality*.... The first great step, of importance for every country newly entering into the movement, is always the constitution of the workers as an independent political party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party."

It is obvious that from this nothing at all can be deduced in defence of a leap *from* Social-Democracy to a non-party labour congress, etc. But whoever would escape Engels's accusation of reducing Marxism to a "dogma", "orthodoxy", "sectarianism", etc., must conclude from it that a joint election campaign with radical "social-reactionaries" is sometimes permissible.

But what is more interesting, of course, is to dwell not so much on these American-Russian parallels (we had to refer to them so as to reply to our opponents), as on the *fundamental* features of the British and American working-class movements. These features are: the absence of any big, nation-wide, *democratic* tasks facing the proletariat; the proletariat's complete subordination to bourgeois politics; the sectarian isolation of groups, of mere handfuls of socialists, from the proletariat; not the slightest success of the socialists among the working masses at the elections, etc. Whoever forgets these fundamental conditions and sets out to draw broad conclusions from "American-Russian parallels", displays the greatest superficiality.

If Engels laid so much stress on the workers' economic organisations in these conditions, it was because the most firmly established democratic systems were under discussion, and these confronted the proletariat with purely socialist tasks.

Engels stressed the importance of an independent workers' party, even with a poor programme, because he was speaking of countries where there had formerly been not even a hint of the workers' political independence and where, in politics, the workers mostly dragged along behind the bourgeoisie, and still do.

It would be making mock of Marx's historical method to attempt to apply conclusions drawn from such arguments to countries or historical situations where the proletariat has formed its party prior to the liberal bourgeoisie forming theirs, where the tradition of voting for bourgeois politicians is absolutely unknown to the proletariat, and where the immediate tasks are not socialist but bourgeois-democratic.

Our idea will become even clearer to the reader if we compare Engels's opinions on the British and American movements with his opinions on the German movement.

Such opinions, of the greatest interest, abound in the published correspondence too. And running like a scarlet thread through all these opinions is something vastly different—a warning against the "Right wing" of the workers' party, a merciless (sometimes—as with Marx in 1877-79—a *furious*) war against *opportunism* in Social-Democracy.

Let us first corroborate this by quoting from the letters, and then proceed to an appraisal of this fact.

First of all, we must here note the opinions expressed by Marx on Höchberg and Co. In his article *Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel*, Franz Mehring attempts to tone down Marx's attacks—as well as Engels's later attacks—against the opportunists and, in our opinion, rather overdoes it. As regards Höchberg and Co., in particular, Mehring insists on his view that Marx's judgement of Lassalle and the Lassalleans[26] was wrong. But, we repeat, what interests us here is not an historical assessment of whether Marx's attacks against particular socialists were correct or exaggerated, but Marx's assessment *in principle*, of definite *trends* in socialism in general.

While complaining about the German Social-Democrats' compromises with the Lassalleans and Dühring (letter of

October 19, 1877). Marx also condemns the compromise "with a whole gang of half-mature students and superwise diploma'd doctors [in German "doctor" is an academic degree corresponding to our "candidate" or "university graduate, class I"], who want to give socialism a 'higher, idealistic' orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands serious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Dr. Höchberg, who publishes the *Zukunft*, is a representative of this tendency, and has 'bought his way' into the Party—with the 'noblest' intentions, I assume, but I do not give a damn for 'intentions'. Anything more miserable than his programme of the *Zukunft* has seldom seen the light of day with more 'modest presumption'." (Letter No. 70.)

In another letter, written almost two years later (September 19, 1879), Marx rebutted the gossip that Engels and he stood behind *J. Most*, and gave Sorge a detailed account of his attitude towards the opportunists in the German Social-Democratic Party. *Zukunft* was run by Höchberg, Schramm and Eduard Bernstein. Marx and Engels *refused* to have anything to do with such a publication, and when the question was raised of establishing a new Party organ with the participation of this same Höchberg and with his financial assistance, Marx and Engels first demanded the acceptance of their nominee, Hirsch, as editor-in-chief, to exercise control over this "mixture of doctors, students and *Katheder*-Socialists" and then addressed a circular letter directly to Bebel, Liebknecht and other leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, warning them that they would openly combat "such a vulgarisation [*Verluderung—an even stronger* word in German] of Party and theory", if the Höchberg, Schramm and Bernstein trend did not change.

This was the period in the German Social-Democratic Party which Mehring described in his *History*[27] as "A Year of Confusion" ("*Ein Jahr der Verwirrung*"). After the Anti-Socialist Law, the Party did not at once find the right path, first swinging over to the anarchism of Most and the opportunism of Höchberg and Co. "These people," Marx wrote of the latter, "nonentities in theory and useless in practice, want to draw the teeth of socialism (which they have fixed up in accordance with the university recipes) and particularly of the Social-Democratic Party, to enlighten the workers or, as they put it, to imbue them with 'elements of education' from their confused half-knowledge, and above all to make the Party respectable in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie. They are just wretched counter-revolutionary windbags."[28]

The result of Marx's "furious" attack was that the opportunists retreated and—made themselves scarce. In a letter dated November 19, 1879, Marx announced that Höchberg had been removed from the editorial committee and that all the influential leaders of the Party—Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke, etc.—had *repudiated* his ideas. *Sozial-Demokrat*, the Social-Democratic Party organ, began to appear under the editorship of Vollmar, who at that time belonged to the revolutionary wing of the Party. A year later (November 5, 1880), Marx related that he and Engels constantly fought the "miserable" way in which *Sozial-Demokrat* was being conducted, and often expressed their opinion *sharply* ("*wobei's oft scharf hergeht*"). Liebknecht visited Marx in 1880 and promised that there would be an "improvement" *in all respects.*

Peace was restored, and the war never came out into the open. Höchberg withdrew, and Bernstein became a revolutionary Social-Democrat—at least until the death of Engels in 1895.

On June 20, 1882, Engels wrote to Sorge and spoke of this struggle as being a thing of the past: "In general, things in Germany are going splendidly. It is true that the literary gentlemen in the Party tried to cause a reactionary ... swing, but they failed miserably. The abuse to which the Social-Democratic workers are being everywhere subjected has made them still more revolutionary than they were three years ago.... These people [the Party literary people] wanted at all costs to beg and secure the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Law by mildness and meekness, fawning and humility, because it has made short shrift of their literary earnings. As soon as the law is repealed ... the split will apparently become an open one, and the Viercks and Höchbergs will form a separate Right wing, where they can, from time to time, be treated with, until they finally land on their backsides. We announced this immediately after the adoption of the Anti-Socialist Law, when Höchberg and Schramm published in the *Yearbook* what was a most infamous judgement of the work of the Party and demanded more cultivated ["*jebildetes*" instead of *gebildetes*—Engels is alluding to the Berlin accent of the German writers], refined and elegant behaviour of the Party."

This forecast of Bernsteinism,[29] made in 1882, was strikingly confirmed in 1898 and subsequent years.

And after that, and particularly after Marx's death, Engels, it may be said without exaggeration, was untiring in his efforts to straighten out what was being distorted by the German opportunists.

The end of 1884. The "petty-bourgeois prejudices" of the German Social-Democratic Reichstag deputies, who had voted for the steamship subsidy ("*Dampfersubvention*", see Mehring's *History*), were condemned. Engels informed Sorge that he had to correspond a great deal on this subject (letter of December 31, 1884).[30]

1885. Giving his opinion of the whole affair of the "*Dampfersubvention*", Engels wrote (June 3) that "it almost came to a split". The "philistinism" of the Social-Democratic deputies was "*colossal*". "A petty-bourgeois socialist parliamentary group is inevitable in a country like Germany", said Engels.

1887. Engels replied to Sorge, who had written to him that the Party was disgracing itself by electing such deputies as Viereck (a Social-Democrat of the Höchberg type). Engels excused himself, saying that there was nothing to be done, the workers' Party could not find good deputies for the Reichstag. "The gentlemen of the Right wing know that they are being tolerated only because of the Anti-Socialist Law, and that they will be thrown out of the Party the very day the Party again secures freedom of action." And, in general, it was preferable that "the Party should be better than its parliamentary heroes, than the other way round" (March 3, 1887). Liebknecht is a conciliator—Engels complained—he always uses phrases to gloss over differences. But when it comes to a split, he will be with us at the decisive moment.

1889. Two international Social-Democratic congresses in Paris. The opportunists (headed by the French Possibilists[31]) split away from the revolutionary Social-Democrats. Engels (who was then sixty-eight years old) flung himself into the fight with the ardour of youth. A number of letters (from January 12 to July 20, 1889) were devoted to the fight against the opportunists. Not only they, but also the Germans—Liebknecht, Bebel and others—were flagellated for their conciliatory attitude.

The Possibilists had sold themselves to the French Government, Engels wrote on January 12, 1889. And he accused the members of the British Social-Democratic Federation (S.D.F.) of having allied themselves with the Possibilists. "The writing and running about in connection with this damned congress leave me no time for anything else" (May 11, 1889). The Possibilists are busy, but our people are asleep, Engels wrote angrily. Now even Auer and Schippel are demanding that we attend the Possibilist congress. But "at last" this opened Liebknecht's eyes. Engels, together with Bernstein, wrote pamphlets (they were signed by Bernstein but Engels called them "our pamphlets") against the opportunists.

"With the exception of the S.D.F., the Possibilists have not a single socialist organisation on their side in the whole of Europe. [June 8, 1889.] They are consequently falling back on the non-socialist trade unions" (this for the information of those who advocate a broad labour party, a labour congress, etc., in our country!). "From America they will get one *Knight of Labor*." The adversary was the same as in the fight against the Bakuninists[32]: "only with this difference that the banner of the anarchists has been replaced by the banner of the Possibilists: the selling of principles to the bourgeoisie for small-scale concessions, especially in return for well-paid jobs for the leaders (on the city councils, labour exchanges, etc.)". Brousse (the leader of the Possibilists) and Hyndman (the leader of the S.D.F. which had joined with the Possibilists) attacked "authoritarian Marxism" and wanted to form the "nucleus of a new International".

"You can have no idea of the naïveté of the Germans. It has cost me tremendous effort to explain even to Bebel what it all really meant" (June 8, 1889). And when the two congresses met, when the revolutionary Social-Democrats outnumbered the Possibilists (*who had united with the trade-unionists*, the S.D.F., a section of the Austrians, etc.), Engels was jubilant (July 17, 1889). He was glad that the conciliatory plans and proposals of Liebknecht and others had failed (July 20, 1889). "It serves our sentimental con-

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ciliatory brethren right that, for all their amicableness, they received a good kick in their tenderest spot. This may cure them for some time."

...Mehring was right when he said (*Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel*) that Marx and Engels did not have much idea of "good manners": "If they did not think long over every blow they dealt, neither did they whimper over every blow they received." "If they think their needle pricks can pierce my old, thick and well-tanned hide, they are mistaken," Engels once wrote. And they assumed that others possessed the imperviousness they had themselves acquired, Mehring said of Marx and Engels.

1893. The chastisement of the Fabians, which suggests itself when passing judgement on the Bernsteinians (for did not Bernstein "evolve" his opportunism in England making use of the experience of the Fabians?). "The Fabians here in London are a band of careerists who have understanding enough to realise the inevitability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the raw proletariat alone, and are therefore kind enough to set themselves at the head. Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle. They are the 'educated' *par excellence*. Their socialism is municipal socialism; not the nation but the community is to become the owner of the means of production, at any rate for the time being. This socialism of theirs is then presented as an extreme but inevitable consequence of bourgeois liberalism; hence their tactics, not of decisively opposing the Liberals as adversaries but of pushing them on towards socialist conclusions and therefore of intriguing with them, of permeating liberalism with socialism—not of putting up socialist candidates against the Liberals but of fastening them on to the Liberals, forcing them upon the Liberals, or swindling them into taking them. They do not of course realise that in doing this they are either lied to and themselves deceived or else are lying about socialism.

"With great industry they have published, amid all sorts of rubbish, some good propagandist writing as well, this in fact being the best the English have produced in this field. But as soon as they get on to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle, it all turns putrid. Hence their fanatical hatred of Marx and all of us—because of the class struggle.

"These people have of course many bourgeois followers and therefore money. ..."*

HOW THE CLASSICS ESTIMATED INTELLECTUALIST OPPORTUNISM IN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

1894. The Peasant Question. "On the Continent," Engels wrote on November 10, 1894, "success is developing the appetite for more success, and catching the peasant, in the literal sense of the word, is becoming the fashion. First the French, in Nantes, declare through Lafargue not only ...that it is not our business to hasten ... the ruin of the small peasants, which capitalism is seeing to for us, but they add that we must directly protect the small peasant against taxation, usury, and landlords. But we cannot co-operate in this, first because it is stupid and second because it is impossible. Next, however, Vollmar comes along in Frankfort and wants to bribe the *peasantry as a whole*, though the peasant he has to deal with in Upper Bavaria is not the debt-ridden small peasant of the Rhineland, but the middle and even the big peasant, who exploits male and female farmhands, and sells cattle and grain in quantity. And that cannot be done without giving up the whole principle."

1894, December 4. "...The Bavarians, who have become very, very opportunistic and have almost turned into an ordinary people's party (that is to say, the majority of leaders and many of those who have recently joined the Party), voted in the Bavarian Diet for the budget as a whole; the Vollmar in particular has started an agitation among the peasants with the object of winning the Upper Bavarian big peasants—people who own 25 to 80 acres of land (10 to 30 hectares) and who therefore cannot manage without wage-labourers—instead of winning their farmhands."

We thus see that for more than ten years Marx and Engels systematically and unswervingly fought opportunism in the German Social-Democratic Party, and attacked intellectualist philistinism and the petty-bourgeois outlook in socialism. This is an extremely important fact. The general public know that German Social-Democracy is regarded as a model of Marxist proletarian policy and tactics, but they do not know what constant warfare the founders of Marxism had to wage against the "Right wing" (Engels's expression) of that Party. And it is no accident that soon after Engels's death this concealed war became an open one. This was an inevitable result of the decades of historical development of German Social-Democracy.

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* F. Engels, Letter to F. A. Sorge, January 18, 1893.—*Ed.*

And now we very clearly perceive the two lines of Engels's (and Marx's) recommendations, directions, corrections, threats and exhortations. The most insistent of their appeals to the British and American socialists was to merge with the working-class movement and eradicate the narrow and hidebound sectarian spirit from their organisations. They were most insistent in teaching the German Social-Democrats to beware of succumbing to philistinism, "parliamentary idiocy" (Marx's expression in the letter of September 19, 1879), and petty-bourgeois intellectualist opportunism.

Is it not typical that our Social-Democratic gossips should have begun cackling about the recommendations of the first kind while remaining silent, holding their tongues, about the second? Is not *such* one-sidedness in appraising the letters of Marx and Engels the best indication of a certain Russian Social-Democratic ... "one-sidedness"?

At the present moment, when the international working-class movement is displaying symptoms of profound ferment and vacillation, when the extremes of opportunism, "parliamentary idiocy" and philistine reformism have evoked the other extremes of revolutionary syndicalism[33]—the general line of Marx's and Engels's "corrections" to British and American and to German socialism acquires exceptional importance.

In countries where there are *no* Social-Democratic workers' parties, *no* Social-Democratic members of parliament, and *no* systematic and steadfast Social-Democratic policy either at elections or in the press, etc.—in such countries, Marx and Engels taught the socialists to rid themselves *at all costs* of narrow sectarianism, and *to join* with the working-class movement so as *to shake up* the proletariat *politically*. For in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century the proletariat displayed *almost no* political independence either in Britain or America. In these countries—where bourgeois-democratic historical tasks were almost entirely nonexistent—the political arena was *completely* held by a triumphant and self-satisfied bourgeoisie, unequalled anywhere in the world in the art of deceiving, corrupting and bribing the workers.

To think that these recommendations, made by Marx and Engels to the British and American working-class movements, can be simply and directly applied to Russian conditions is to use Marxism not in order to achieve clarity on its *method*, not in order *to study* the concrete historical features of the working-class movement in definite countries, but in order to pay off petty, factional, and intellectualist scores.

On the other hand, in a country where the bourgeois-democratic revolution was still unconsummated, where "military despotism, embellished with parliamentary forms" (Marx's expression in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*[34]) prevailed, and still does, where the proletariat had long ago been drawn into politics and was pursuing a Social-Democratic policy—in such a country what Marx and Engels most of all feared was parliamentary vulgarisation and philistine derogation of the tasks and scope of the working-class movement.

It is all the more our duty to emphasise and give prominence to *this* side of Marxism, in the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, because in our country a vast, "brilliant" and rich liberal-bourgeois press is vociferously trumpeting to the proletariat the "exemplary" loyalty, parliamentary legality, the modesty and moderation of the neighbouring German working-class movement.

This mercenary lie of the bourgeois betrayers of the Russian revolution is not due to accident or to the personal depravity of certain past or future ministers in the Cadet[35] camp. It stems from the profound economic interests of the Russian liberal landlords and liberal bourgeois. And in combating this lie, this "stupefying of the masses" ("*Massenverdummung*"—Engels's expression in his letter of November 29, 1886), the letters of Marx and Engels should serve as an indispensable weapon for all Russian socialists.

The mercenary lie of the liberal bourgeois holds up to the people the exemplary "modesty" of the German Social-Democrats. The leaders of these Social-Democrats, the founders of the theory of Marxism, tell us:

"The revolutionary language and action of the French have made the hypocrisy of Viereck and Co. [the opportunist Social-Democrats in the German Reichstag Social-Democratic group] sound quite feeble" (this was said in reference to the formation of a labour group in the French Chamber and to the Decazeville strike,[36] which split the French Radicals from the French proletariat). "Only Liebknecht and Bebel spoke in the last Socialist debate and both of them spoke well. We can with this debate once more show ourselves in decent society, which was by no means the case with all of them. In general it is a good thing that the Germans' leadership of the international socialist movement, particularly after they sent so many philistines to the Reichstag (which, it is true, was unavoidable), is being challenged. *In Germany everything becomes philistine in peaceful times*; and therefore the sting of French competition is *absolutely necessary*...." (Letter of April 29, 1886.)

These are the lessons to be learnt most thoroughly by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which is predominantly under the ideological influence of German Social-Democracy.

These lessons are taught us not by any particular passage in the correspondence of the greatest men of the nineteenth century but by the whole spirit and substance of their comradely and frank criticism of the international experience of the proletariat, a criticism to which diplomacy and petty considerations were alien.

How far all the letters of Marx and Engels were indeed imbued with this spirit may also be seen from the following relatively specific but extremely typical passages.

In 1889 a young and fresh movement of untrained and unskilled labourers (gasworkers, dockers, etc.) arose in Britain, a movement marked by a new and revolutionary spirit. Engels was delighted with it. He referred exultingly to the part played by Tussy, Marx's daughter, who conducted agitation among these workers. "...The most repulsive thing here," he says, writing from London on December 7, 1889, "is the bourgeois 'respectability' which has grown deep into the bones of the workers. The division of society into innumerable strata, each recognised without question, each with its own pride but also its inborn respect for its 'betters' and 'superiors', is so old and firmly established that the bourgeois still find it fairly easy to get their bait accepted. I am not at all sure, for instance, that John Burns is not secretly prouder of his popularity with Cardinal Manning, the Lord Mayor, and the bourgeoisie in general than of his popularity with his own class. And Champion—an ex-lieutenant—intrigued years ago with bourgeois and especially with conservative elements, preached socialism at the parsons' Church Congress, etc. And even Tom Mann, whom I regard as the best of the lot, is fond of mentioning that he will be lunching with the Lord Mayor. If one compares this with the French, one realises what a revolution is good for after all."

No comment is needed.

Another example. In 1891 there was danger of a European war. Engels corresponded on the subject with Bebel, and they agreed that in the event of Russia attacking Germany, the German socialists must desperately fight the Russians and any allies of the Russians. "If Germany is crushed, then we shall be too, while at best the struggle will be such a violent one that Germany will only be able to maintain herself by revolutionary means, so that very possibly we shall be forced to take the helm and stage a 1793." (Letter of October 24, 1891.)

Let this be noted by those opportunists who shouted from the house-tops that "Jacobin" prospects for the Russian workers' party in 1905 were un-Social-Democratic! Engels squarely suggested to Bebel the possibility of the Social-Democrats having to participate in a provisional government.

Holding such views on the tasks of Social-Democratic workers' parties, Marx and Engels naturally possessed the most fervent faith in a Russian revolution and its great world significance. We see this ardent expectation of a revolution in Russia in this correspondence, over a period of nearly twenty years.

Take Marx's letter of September 27, 1877. He is quite enthusiastic about the Eastern crisis: "Russia has long been standing on the threshold of an upheaval, all the elements of it are prepared.... The gallant Turks have hastened the explosion by years with the thrashing they have inflicted.... The upheaval will begin *secundum artem* [according to the rules of the art] with some *playing at constitutionalism, et puis il y aura un beau tapage* [and then there will be a fine row]. If Mother Nature is not particularly unfavourable towards us, we shall yet live to see the fun!" (Marx was then fifty-nine years old.)

Mother Nature did not—and could not very well—permit

Marx to live "to see the fun". But he *foretold* the "playing at constitutionalism", and it is as though his words were written yesterday in relation to the First and Second Russian Dumas.[37] And we know that the warning to the people against "playing at constitutionalism" was the "living soul" of the boycott tactics so detested by the liberals and opportunists....

Or take Marx's letter of November 5, 1880. He was delighted with the success of *Capital* in Russia, and took the part of the members of the Narodnaya Volya organisation against the newly-arisen General Redistribution group. Marx correctly perceived the anarchistic elements in their views. Not knowing and having then no opportunity of knowing the future evolution of the General-Redistribution Narodniks into Social-Democrats, Marx attacked them with all his trenchant sarcasm:

"These gentlemen are against all political-revolutionary action. Russia is to make a somersault into the anarchist-communist-atheist millennium! Meanwhile, they are preparing for this leap with the most tedious doctrinairism, whose so-called *principes courent la rue depuis le feu Bakounine*."

We can gather from this how Marx would have appreciated the significance for Russia of 1905 and the succeeding years of *Social-Democracy*'s "political-revolutionary action".*

There is a letter by Engels dated April 6, 1887: "On the other hand, it seems as if a crisis is impending in Russia. The recent attentates rather upset the apple-cart...." A letter of April 9, 1887, says the same thing.... "The army is full of discontented, conspiring officers. [Engels at that time was impressed by the revolutionary struggle of the Narodnaya Volya organisation; he set his hopes on the officers, and did not yet see the revolutionary spirit of the Russian soldiers and sailors, which was manifested so magnificently eighteen years later....] I do not think things will last another year; and once it [the revolution] breaks out [*losgeht*] in Russia, then hurrah!"

A letter of April 23, 1887: "In Germany there is persecution after persecution [of socialists]. It looks as if Bismarck wants to have everything ready, so that the moment the revolution breaks out in Russia, which is now only a question of months, Germany could immediately follow her example [losgeschlagen werden]."

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* Incidentally, if my memory does not deceive me, Plekhanov or V. I. Zasulich told me in 1900-03 about the existence of a letter from Engels to Plekhanov concerning *Our Differences* and the character of the impending revolution in Russia. It would be interesting to know exactly whether there was such a letter, whether it still exists, and whether the time has come to publish it.

The months proved to be very, very long ones. No doubt, philistines will be found who, knitting their brows and wrinkling their foreheads, will sternly condemn Engels's "revolutionism", or will indulgently laugh at the old utopias of the old revolutionary exile.

Yes, Marx and Engels made many and frequent mistakes in determining the proximity of revolution, in their hopes in the victory of revolution (e.g., in 1848 in Germany), in their faith in the imminence of a German "republic" ("to die for the republic", wrote Engels of that period, recalling his sentiments as a participant in the military campaign for a Reich constitution in 1848-49). They were mistaken in 1871 when they were engaged in "raising revolt in Southern France, for which they [Becker writes "we", referring to himself and his closest friends: letter No. 14 of July 21, 1871] sacrificed and risked all that was humanly possible...". The same letter says: "If we had had more means in March and April we would have roused the whole of Southern France and would have saved the Commune in Paris" (p. 29). But *such* errors—the errors of the giants of revolutionary thought, who sought to raise, and did raise, the proletariat of the whole world above the level of petty, commonplace and trivial tasks—are a thousand times more noble and magnificent and *historically more valuable and true* than the trite wisdom of official liberalism, which lauds, shouts, appeals and holds forth about the vanity of revolutionary vanities, the futility of the revolutionary struggle and the charms of counter-revolutionary "constitutional" fantasies....

The Russian working class will win their freedom and give an impetus to Europe by their revolutionary action, full though it be of errors—and let the philistines pride themselves on the infallibility of their revolutionary inaction.

Written on April 6 (19), 1907
Published in 1907 in the book
Letters by Johannes Becker, Joseph Dietzgen, Frederick Engels, Karl Marx, and Others to Friedrich Sorge and Others.
Published by P. G. Dauge, St. Petersburg

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THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN STUTTGART

A feature of the International Socialist Congress held in Stuttgart this August was its large and representative composition: the total of 886 delegates came from all the five continents. Besides providing an impressive demonstration of international unity in the proletarian struggle, the Congress played an outstanding part in defining the tactics of the socialist parties. It adopted general resolutions on a number of questions, the decision of which had hitherto been left solely to the discretion of the individual socialist parties. And the fact that more and more problems require uniform, principled decisions in different countries is striking proof that socialism is being welded into a single international force.

The full text of the Stuttgart resolutions will be found elsewhere in this issue.[38] We shall deal briefly with each of them in order to bring out the chief controversial points and the character of the debate at the Congress.

This is not the first time the colonial question has figured at international congresses. Up till now their decisions have always been an unqualified condemnation of bourgeois colonial policy as a policy of plunder and violence. This time, however, the Congress Commission was so composed that opportunist elements, headed by Van Kol of Holland, predominated in it. A sentence was inserted in the draft resolution to the effect that the Congress did not in principle condemn all colonial policy, for under socialism colonial policy could play a civilising role. The minority in the Commission (Ledebour of Germany, the Polish and Russian Social-Democrats, and many others) vigorously protested against any such idea being entertained. The matter was referred to Congress, where the forces of the two trends were found to be so nearly equal that there was an extremely heated debate.

The opportunists rallied behind Van Kol. Speaking for the majority of the German delegation Bernstein and David urged acceptance of a "socialist colonial policy" and fulminated against the radicals for their barren, negative attitude, their failure to appreciate the importance of reforms, their lack of a practical colonial programme, etc. Incidentally, they were opposed by Kautsky, who felt compelled to ask the Congress to pronounce *against* the majority of the German delegation. He rightly pointed out that there was no question of rejecting the struggle for reforms; that was explicitly stated in other sections of the resolution, which had evoked no dispute. The point at issue was whether we should make concessions to the modern regime of bourgeois plunder and violence. The Congress was to discuss present-day colonial policy, which was based on the downright enslavement of primitive populations. The bourgeoisie was actually introducing slavery in the colonies and subjecting the native populations to unprecedented outrages and acts of violence, "civilising" them by the spread of liquor and syphilis. And in that situation socialists were expected to utter evasive phrases about the possibility of accepting colonial policy in principle! That would be an outright desertion to the bourgeois point of view. It would be a decisive step towards subordinating the proletariat to bourgeois ideology, to bourgeois imperialism, which is now arrogantly raising its head.

The Congress defeated the Commission's motion by 128 votes to 108 with ten abstentions (Switzerland). It should be noted that at Stuttgart, for the first time, each nation was allotted a definite number of votes, varying from twenty (for the big nations, Russia included) to two (Luxembourg). The combined vote of the small nations, which either do not pursue a colonial policy, or which suffer from it, outweighed the vote of nations where even the proletariat has been somewhat infected with the lust of conquest.

This vote on the colonial question is of very great importance. First, it strikingly showed up socialist opportunism, which succumbs to bourgeois blandishments. Secondly, it revealed a negative feature in the European labour movement, one that can do no little harm to the proletarian cause, and for that reason should receive serious attention. Marx frequently quoted a very significant saying of Sismondi. The proletarians of the ancient world, this saying runs, lived at the expense of society; modern society lives at the expense of the proletarians.

The non-propertied, but non-working, class is incapable of overthrowing the exploiters. Only the proletarian class, which maintains the whole of society, can bring about the social revolution. However, as a result of the extensive colonial policy, the European proletarian *partly* finds himself in a position when it is *not* his labour, but the labour of the practically enslaved natives in the colonies, that maintains the whole of society. The British bourgeoisie, for example, derives more profit from the many millions of the population of India and other colonies than from the British workers. In certain countries this provides the material and economic basis for infecting the proletariat with colonial chauvinism. Of course, this may be only a temporary phenomenon, but the evil must nonetheless be clearly realised and its causes understood in order to be able to rally the proletariat of all countries for the struggle against such opportunism. This struggle is bound to be victorious, since the "privileged" nations are a diminishing faction of the capitalist nations.

There were practically no differences at the Congress on the question of women's suffrage. The only one who tried to make out a case for a socialist campaign in favour of a limited women's suffrage (qualified as opposed to universal suffrage) was a woman delegate from the extremely opportunist British Fabian Society. No one supported her. Her motives were simple enough: British bourgeois ladies hope to obtain the franchise for themselves, without its extension to women workers in Britain.

The First International Socialist Women's Conference was held concurrently with the Congress in the same building. Both at this Conference and in the Congress Commission there was an interesting dispute between the German and Austrian Social-Democrats on the draft resolution. In their campaign for universal suffrage the Austrians tended to play down the demand for equal rights of men and women; on practical grounds they placed the main emphasis on male suffrage. Clara Zetkin and other German Social-

Democrats rightly pointed out to the Austrians that they were acting incorrectly, and that by failing to press the demand that the vote be granted to women as well as men, they were weakening the mass movement. The concluding words of the Stuttgart resolution ("the demand for universal suffrage should be put forward *simultaneously* for both men and women") undoubtedly relate to this episode of excessive "practicalism" in the history of the Austrian labour movement.

The resolution on the relations between the socialist parties and the trade unions is of especial importance to us Russians. The Stockholm R.S.D.L.P. Congress[39] went on record for *non-Party* unions, thus endorsing the neutrality standpoint, which has always been upheld by our non-Party democrats, Bernsteinians and Socialist-Revolutionaries.[40] The London Congress,[41] on the other hand, put forward a different principle, namely, closer alignment of the unions with the Party, even including, under certain conditions, their recognition as Party unions. At Stuttgart in the Social-Democratic subsection of the Russian section (the socialists of each country form a separate section at international congresses) opinion was divided on this issue (there was no split on other issues). Plekhanov upheld the neutrality principle. Voinov, a Bolshevik, defended the anti-neutralist viewpoint of the London Congress and of the Belgian resolution (published in the Congress materials with de Brouckère's report, which will soon appear in Russian). Clara Zetkin rightly remarked in her journal *Die Gleichheit* that Plekhanov's arguments for neutrality were just as lame as those of the French. And the Stuttgart resolution—as Kautsky rightly observed and as anyone who takes the trouble to read it carefully will see—puts an end to recognition of the "neutrality" principle. There is not a word in it about neutrality or non-party principles. On the contrary, it definitely recognises the need for closer and stronger connections between the unions and the socialist parties.

The resolution of the London R.S.D.L.P. Congress on the trade unions has thus been placed on a firm theoretical basis in the form of the Stuttgart resolution. The Stuttgart resolution lays down the general principle that in every country the unions must be brought into permanent and close contact with the socialist party. The London resolution says that in Russia this should take the form, under favourable conditions, of party unions, and party members must work towards that goal.

We note that the harmful aspects of the neutrality principle were revealed in Stuttgart by the fact that the trade-union half of the German delegation were the most adamant supporters of opportunist views. That is why in Essen, for example, the Germans were against Van Kol (the trade unions were not represented in Essen, which was a Congress solely of the Party), while in Stuttgart they supported him. By playing into the hands of the opportunists in the Social-Democratic movement the advocacy of neutrality in Germany has *actually* had harmful results. This is a fact that should not be overlooked, especially in Russia, where the bourgeois-democratic counsellors of the proletariat, who urge it to keep the trade-union movement "neutral", are so numerous.

A few words about the resolution on emigration and immigration. Here, too, in the Commission there was an attempt to defend narrow, craft interests, to ban the immigration of workers from backward countries (coolies—from China, etc.). This is the same spirit of aristocratism that one finds among workers in some of the "civilised" countries, who derive certain advantages from their privileged position, and are, therefore, inclined to forget the need for international class solidarity. But no one at the Congress defended this craft and petty-bourgeois narrow-mindedness. The resolution fully meets the demands of revolutionary Social-Democracy.

We pass now to the last, and perhaps the most important, resolution of the Congress—that on anti-militarism. The notorious Hervé, who has made such a noise in France and Europe, advocated a semi-anarchist view by naïvely suggesting that every war be "answered" by a strike and an uprising. He did not understand, on the one hand, that war is a necessary product of capitalism, and that the proletariat cannot renounce participation in revolutionary wars, for such wars are possible, and have indeed occurred in capitalist societies. He did not understand, on the other hand, that the possibility of "answering" a war depends on the nature of the crisis created by that war. The choice of the means of struggle depends on these conditions; moreover, the struggle must consist (and here we have the third misconception, or shallow thinking of Hervéism) not simply in replacing war by peace, but in replacing capitalism by socialism. The essential thing is not merely to prevent war, but to utilise the crisis created by war in order to hasten the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. However, underlying all these semi-anarchist absurdities of Hervéism there was one sound and practical purpose: to spur the socialist movement so that it will not be restricted to parliamentary methods of struggle alone, so that the masses will realise the need for revolutionary action in connection with the crises which war inevitably involves, so that, lastly, a more lively understanding of international labour solidarity and of the falsity of bourgeois patriotism will be spread among the masses.

Bebel's resolution (moved by the Germans and coinciding in all essentials with Guesde's resolution) had one shortcoming—it failed to indicate the active tasks of the proletariat. This made it possible to read Bebel's orthodox propositions through opportunist spectacles, and Vollmar was quick to turn this possibility into a reality.

That is why Rosa Luxemburg and the Russian Social-Democratic delegates moved their amendments to Bebel's resolution. These amendments (1) stated that militarism is the chief weapon of class oppression; (2) pointed out the need for propaganda among the youth; (3) stressed that Social-Democrats should not only try to prevent war from breaking out or to secure the speediest termination of wars that have already begun, but should utilise the crisis created by the war to hasten the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

The subcommission (elected by the Anti-Militarism Commission) incorporated all these amendments in Bebel's resolution. In addition, Jaurès made this happy suggestion: instead of enumerating the methods of struggle (strikes, uprisings) the resolution should cite historical examples of proletarian action against war, from the demonstrations in Europe to the revolution in Russia. The result of all this redrafting was a resolution which, it is true, is unduly long, but is rich in thought and precisely formulates the tasks of the proletariat. It combines the stringency of orthodox—i.e., the only scientific Marxist analysis with recommendations for the most resolute and revolutionary action by the workers' parties. This resolution cannot be interpreted *à la* Vollmar, nor can it be fitted into the narrow framework of naïve Hervéism.

On the whole, the Stuttgart Congress brought into sharp contrast the opportunist and revolutionary wings of the international Social-Democratic movement on a number of cardinal issues and decided these issues in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. Its resolutions and the report of the debates should become a handbook for every propagandist. The work done at Stuttgart will greatly promote the unity of tactics and unity of revolutionary struggle of the proletarians of all countries.

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From THE AGRARIAN PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 1905-1907

Chapter IV

POLITICAL AND TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN QUESTIONS OF THE AGRARIAN PROGRAMME

7. MUNICIPALISATION OF THE LAND AND MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM

These two terms were made equivalent by the Mensheviks themselves, who secured the adoption of the agrarian programme at Stockholm.[42] We need only mention the names of two prominent Mensheviks, Kostrov and Larin. "Some comrades," said Kostrov at Stockholm, "seem to be hearing about municipal ownership for the first time. Let me remind them that in Western Europe there is a whole political trend [!precisely!] called 'municipal socialism' [England], which advocates the extension of ownership by urban and rural municipalities, and which is also supported by our comrades. Many municipalities own real estate, and that does not contradict our programme. We now have the possibility of acquiring [!] real estate for the municipalities gratis [!!] and we should take advantage of it. Of course, the confiscated land should be municipalised" (p. 88).

The naïve idea about "the possibility of acquiring property gratis" is magnificently expressed here. But in citing the example of this municipal socialism "trend" as a special trend mainly characteristic of England, the speaker did not stop to think why this is an *extremely opportunist* trend. Why did Engels, in his letters to Sorge describing this extreme intellectual opportunism of the English Fabians, emphasise the petty-bourgeois nature of their "municipalisation" schemes?[43]

Larin, in unison with Kostrov, says in his comments on the Menshevik programme: "Perhaps in some areas the people's local self-governing bodies will themselves be able to run these large estates, as the horse tramways or slaughter-houses are run by municipal councils, and then all [!!] the profits obtained from them will be placed at the disposal of the whole [!] population"*—and not of the local bourgeoisie, my dear Larin?

The philistine illusions of the philistine heroes of West-European municipal socialism are already making themselves felt. The fact that the bourgeoisie is in power is forgotten; so also is the fact that only in towns with a high percentage of *proletarian* population is it possible to obtain for the working people some crumbs of benefit from municipal government! But all this is by the way. The principal fallacy of the "municipal socialism" idea of municipalising the land lies in the following.

The bourgeois intelligentsia of the West, like the English Fabians, elevate municipal socialism to a special "trend" precisely because it dreams of social peace, of class conciliation, and seeks to divert public attention away from the fundamental questions of the economic system as a whole, and of the state *structure* as a whole, to minor questions of *local* self-*government*. In the sphere of questions in the first category, the class antagonisms stand out most sharply; that is the sphere which, as we have shown, affects the very foundations of the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Hence it is in that sphere that the philistine, reactionary utopia of bringing about socialism piecemeal is particularly hopeless. Attention is diverted to the sphere of minor local questions, being directed not to the question of the class rule of the bourgeoisie, nor to the question of the chief instruments of that rule, but to the question of distributing the *crumbs* thrown by the rich bourgeoisie for the "*needs of the population*". Naturally, since attention is focused on such questions as the spending of paltry sums (in comparison with the total surplus value and total state expenditure of the bourgeoisie), which the *bourgeoisie itself is willing* to set aside for public health (Engels pointed out in *The Housing Question* that the bourgeoisie itself is afraid of the spread of epidemic diseases in the towns[44]), or for education (the bourgeoisie must have trained workers able to adapt themselves to a high technical level!), and so on, it is possible, in the sphere of *such minor* questions, to hold forth about "social peace", about the harmfulness of the class struggle, and so on. What class struggle can there be if the bourgeoisie itself is spending money on the "needs of the population", on public health, on education? What need is there for a social revolution if it is possible through the local self-governing bodies, gradually, step by step, to extend "collective ownership", and "socialise" production: the horse tramways, the slaughter-houses referred to so relevantly by the worthy Y. Larin?

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* *The Peasant Question and Social-Democracy*, p. 66.

The philistine opportunism of that "trend" lies in the fact that people forget the *narrow limits* of so-called "municipal socialism" (in reality, municipal capitalism, as the English Social-Democrats properly point out in their controversies with the Fabians). They forget that so long as the bourgeoisie rules as a class it cannot allow any encroachment, even from the "municipal" point of view, upon the real *foundations* of its rule; that if the bourgeoisie allows, tolerates, "municipal socialism", it is because the latter does not touch the *foundations* of its rule, does not interfere with the *important* sources of its wealth, but extends only to the narrow sphere of local expenditure, which the bourgeoisie itself *allows* the "population" to manage. It does not need more than a slight acquaintance with "municipal socialism" in the West to know that any attempt on the part of *socialist* municipalities to go a little beyond the boundaries of their normal, i.e., minor, petty activities, which give no *substantial* relief to the workers, any attempt to meddle with *capital*, is invariably vetoed in the most emphatic manner by the central authorities of the bourgeois state.

And it is this fundamental mistake, this philistine opportunism of the West-European Fabians, Possibilists, and Bernsteinians that is taken over by our advocates of municipalisation.

"Municipal socialism" means socialism in matters of *local government*. Anything that goes beyond the limits of *local* interests, beyond the limits of state *administration*, i.e., anything that affects the main sources of revenue of the ruling classes and the principal means of securing their rule, anything that affects not the administration of the state, but the *structure* of the state, *thereby* goes beyond the sphere of "municipal socialism". But our wiseacres evade this acute national issue, this question of the land, which affects the vital interests of the ruling classes in the most direct way, by *relegating* it to the sphere of "local government questions". In the West they municipalise horse trams and slaughter-houses, so why should we not municipalise the best half of all the land?—argues the Russian petty intellectual. That would serve both in the event of restoration and in the event of incomplete democratisation of the central government!

And so we get agrarian socialism in a bourgeois revolution, a socialism of the most petty-bourgeois kind, one that counts on *blunting* the class struggle on *vital* issues by *relegating* the latter to the domain of petty questions affecting only local government. In fact, the question of the disposal of one half of the best land in the country is neither a local question nor a question of administration. It is a question that affects the whole state, a question of the structure, not only of the landlord, but of the bourgeois state. And to try to entice the people with the idea that "municipal socialism" can be developed in agriculture before the socialist revolution is accomplished is to practise the most inadmissible kind of demagogy. Marxism permits nationalisation to be included in the programme of a bourgeois revolution because nationalisation is a bourgeois measure, because absolute rent hinders the development of capitalism; private ownership of the land is a hindrance to capitalism. But to include the municipalisation of the big estates in the programme of the bourgeois revolution, Marxism must be remodelled into Fabian intellectualist opportunism.

It is here that we see the difference between petty-bourgeois and proletarian methods in the bourgeois revolution. The petty bourgeoisie, even the most radical—our Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries included—anticipates that *after* the bourgeois revolution there will be no class struggle, but universal prosperity and peace. Therefore, it "builds its nest" in advance, it introduces plans for petty-bourgeois reforms in the bourgeois revolution, talks about various "norms" and "regulations" with regard to landownership, about strengthening the labour principle and small farming, etc. The petty-bourgeois method is the method of building up relations making for the greatest possible degree of social peace. The proletarian method is *exclusively* that of clearing the path of all that is medieval, clearing it for the *class struggle*. Therefore, the proletarian can leave it to the small proprietors to discuss "norms" of landownership;

the proletarian is interested only in the abolition of the landlord latifundia, the abolition of private ownership of land, that *last* barrier to the class struggle in agriculture. In the bourgeois revolution we are interested not in petty-bourgeois reformism, not in a future "nest" of tranquillised small farmers, but in the conditions for the proletarian struggle against all petty-bourgeois tranquillity on a bourgeois basis.

It is this anti-proletarian spirit that municipalisation introduces into the programme of the *bourgeois* agrarian revolution; for, despite the deeply fallacious opinion of the Mensheviks, municipalisation does not extend and sharpen the class struggle, but, on the contrary, *blunts* it. It blunts it, too, by assuming that local democracy is possible without the complete democratisation of the centre. It also blunts it with the idea of "municipal socialism", because the latter is *conceivable* in bourgeois society only *away from* the high road of the struggle, only in minor, local, unimportant questions on which *even* the bourgeoisie may yield, may reconcile itself to without losing this possibility of preserving its class rule.

The working class must give bourgeois society the purest, most consistent and most thorough-going programme of bourgeois revolution, including the bourgeois nationalisation of the land. The proletariat scornfully rejects petty-bourgeois reformism in the bourgeois revolution; we are interested in freedom for the struggle, not in freedom for philistine bliss.

Naturally, the opportunism of the intelligentsia in the workers' party takes a different line. Instead of the broad revolutionary programme of bourgeois revolution, attention is focused on a petty-bourgeois utopia: to secure local democracy with incomplete democratisation at the centre, to secure for petty reformism a little corner of municipal activity away from great "turmoil", and to evade the extraordinarily acute conflict over the land by following the recipe of the anti-Semites, i.e., by relegating an important national issue to the domain of petty, local questions.

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TRADE UNION NEUTRALITY

In the previous issue of *Proletary* we published the resolution of our Party Central Committee on trade unions.[45] In reporting the resolution, *Nash Vek* added that it had been adopted unanimously in the C.C., as the Mensheviks voted for it in view of the concessions it contains compared with the original Bolshevik draft. If this report is true (the defunct *Nash Vek* was in general exceptionally well informed about everything relating to Menshevism), it only remains for us to heartily welcome the big step towards united Social-Democratic activity in such an important field as the trade unions. The concessions referred to by *Nash Vek* are quite insignificant, and do not in the least affect the basic principles of the Bolshevik draft (which, incidentally, was published in *Proletary*, No. 17, October 20, 1907, along with a lengthy article in support of it, entitled "The Trade Unions and the Social-Democratic Party").

Our whole Party, consequently, has now recognised that work in the trade unions must be conducted not in the spirit of trade union neutrality but in the spirit of the closest possible relations between them and the Social-Democratic Party. It is also recognised that the partisanship of the trade unions must be achieved exclusively by S.D. work within the unions, that the S.D.s must form solid Party units in the unions, and that illegal unions should be formed since legal ones are impossible.

There can be no doubt that Stuttgart[46] has been strongly instrumental in bringing the two factions of our Party closer together on the question of the nature of our work in the trade unions. The Stuttgart Congress resolution, as Kautsky pointed out in his report to the Leipzig workers, puts an end to recognising the principle of neutrality. The high degree to which class contradictions have developed, their aggravation latterly in all countries, the long experience of Germany (where the policy of neutrality strengthened opportunism in the trade unions without preventing the appearance of special Christian and Liberal unions), and the widening of that special area of proletarian struggle which requires joint and concerted action by both the unions and the political party (the mass strike and the armed uprising in the Russian revolution, as the prototype of likely forms of the proletarian revolution in the West)—all these things have cut the ground from under the neutrality theory.

Among the proletarian parties the question of neutrality is unlikely now to evoke any serious controversy. The case is different with the non-proletarian quasi-socialist parties like our Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are in fact the extreme Left wing of the revolutionary bourgeois party of intellectuals and progressive peasants.

It is highly characteristic that in our country the only people to defend the *idea* of neutrality after Stuttgart have been the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Plekhanov. And they have done so very unsuccessfully.

In the last issue of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party organ, *Znamya Truda* (No. 8, December 1907), we find two articles devoted to the trade union movement. In those articles the S.R.s attempt primarily to ridicule the statement of the Social-Democratic newspaper, *Vperyod*, that the Stuttgart resolution settled the question of the Party's attitude to the trade unions along the same lines as the London resolution, namely, in the Bolshevik spirit. Our answer is that in the very same issue of *Znamya Truda* the S.R.s themselves cited *facts* which prove such an assessment to be absolutely correct.

"It was at that time, too," writes *Znamya Truda*, referring to the autumn of 1905, "and it is a characteristic fact, that the three Russian socialist factions: the Menshevik Social-Democrats, the Bolshevik Social-Democrats, and the S.R.s, first met face to face to state their views on the trade union movement. The Moscow Bureau, which was instructed to select from its midst a central bureau for convening a congress (of trade unions), organised a big meeting of worker trade unionists at the Olympia Theatre.* The Mensheviks put forward a classically Marxist, strictly orthodox delimitation between the aim of the Party and that of the trade unions. 'The task of the S.D. Party is to establish the socialist system and abolish capitalist relations; the task of the trade unions is to improve working conditions within the framework of the capitalist system, so as to secure for labour advantageous conditions for the sale of its labour-power'; the conclusion drawn was that the trade unions are non-partisan, and that they embrace 'all workers of a given occupation'.**

"The Bolsheviks argued that at the present time there could not be a strict separation of politics from occupation, and hence drew the conclusion that 'there must be close unity between the Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions, which it must lead'. Finally, the S.R.s demanded that the unions be strictly non-partisan, in order to avoid a split in the ranks of the proletariat, but rejected any narrowing down of the tasks and activities of the trade unions to a limited sphere, formulating this task as an all-out struggle against capital, and therefore as both an economic and a political struggle."

That is how *Znamya Truda* itself describes the *facts*! And only a person who is blind or totally incapable of thinking can deny that of these three viewpoints it is the one that speaks of close unity between the Social-Democratic Party and the unions that "is confirmed by the Stuttgart resolution, which recommends close ties between the Party and the trade unions".***

To confuse this perfectly clear issue, the S.R.s, in the most diverting manner, mixed up the independence of the trade unions in the economic struggle with their non-party character. "The Stuttgart Congress," they write, "definitely stood also for the independence (the non-partisanship) of the unions, i.e., rejected the viewpoint of both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks." This conclusion is drawn from the following words in the Stuttgart resolution: "Each of the two organisations [the Party and the trade union] has its own sphere, determined by its nature, and within which it must act quite independently. At the same time, however, there is an ever expanding sphere," and so on, as quoted above. Yet we find wags who *mixed up* this demand for the "independence" of the trade unions in the "sphere determined by their nature" with the question of the non-partisanship of the unions or their close alignment with the Party in the political sphere and in dealing with the tasks of the socialist revolution!

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* The meeting was attended by about fifteen hundred people. See the report in *Bulleten Muzeya Sodeistviya Trudu* No. 2, November 26, 1905 (quoted by *Znamya Truda*).

** It should be said, however, that the Mensheviks' idea of this "non-partisanship" was a rather peculiar one. Thus, their spokesman illustrated his points in the following way: "A correct answer to the question of partisanship has been given in the Moscow Printers' Union, which proposes that comrades join the S.D. Party as individuals." (Note by *Znamya Truda*.)

*** What the Mensheviks put forward in November 1905 was not orthodox but *vulgar* views on neutrality. Let the S.R. gentlemen remember that!

In this way our S.R.s completely suppressed the fundamental issue of the appraisal of the "neutrality" theory, a theory that in fact serves to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. In place of this fundamental issue, they preferred to speak only of the specifically Russian situation where there are several socialist parties, and did so in such a way as to throw a *false* light on what happened at Stuttgart. "One cannot argue that the Stuttgart resolution is hazy," writes *Znamya Truda*, "for Mr. Plekhanov removed all haziness and doubt when he addressed the International Congress as the Party's official representative; and so far no statement has been issued by the Central S.D. Committee that 'such a statement by Comrade Plekhanov disorganises the ranks of the united party....'"

Gentlemen of the S.R. Party! You are entitled, of course, to speak ironically about our C.C. having called Plekhanov to order. You are entitled to think that one can respect, say, a party which officially *does not condemn* Mr. Gershuni's pro-Cadet conduct. But why tell a plain untruth? Plekhanov *was not* the representative of the S.D. Party at the Stuttgart Congress, but only one of its 33 delegates. And what he represented was the views not of the S.D. Party but of the present Menshevik opposition to that Party and to its London decisions. The S.R.s cannot but be aware of this, which means they are telling a *deliberate* untruth.

"...In the committee that examined the question of the relations between the trade unions and the political party, he [Plekhanov] literally said the following: 'There are 11 revolutionary organisations in Russia; with which of them should the trade unions align themselves?... Introducing political differences into the trade unions in Russia would be harmful.' In answer to this the members of the committee *all unanimously* declared that the Congress resolution must not be interpreted in that way, that they 'do not by any means oblige the trade unions and their members to join the S.D. Party', that they, as stated in the resolution, demanded their 'complete independence'" (*Znamya Truda*'s italics).

You are mixing things up, gentlemen of *Znamya Truda*! In the committee a *Belgian* comrade asked whether it could be made obligatory for trade union members to join the Social-Democratic Party, and *everyone* answered that it could not. Plekhanov, on the other hand, proposed an amendment to the resolution, saying: "Unity of the trade union organisation, however, should not be lost sight of." This amendment was adopted, but not unanimously (Comrade Voinov, who represented the views of the R.S.D.L.P., voted for the amendment, and in our opinion was right in doing so). That was how matters stood.

Social-Democrats should never lose sight of unity of the trade union organisation. That is quite right. But this applies also to the S.R.s whom we invite to ponder over this "unity of the trade union organisation" when the latter announces its close ties with Social-Democracy! Nobody ever dreamt of "obliging" trade union members to join the S.D. Party; fear made the S.R.s imagine that. And to suggest that the Stuttgart Congress prohibited trade unions from declaring their close ties with the Social-Democratic Party or from establishing *such* ties in reality, in actual life, is a cock-and-bull story.

"The Russian S.D.s," writes *Znamya Truda*, "are conducting a strenuous and unremitting campaign to win the trade unions and subordinate them to their Party leadership. The Bolsheviks are doing this frankly and openly... the Mensheviks have chosen a more roundabout way...." Correct, gentlemen of the S.R. Party! For the sake of the prestige of the workers' International you are entitled to demand of us that we conduct this campaign in a tactful and restrained way, "not losing sight of the unity of the trade union organisation". We readily admit this, and demand the same admission from you, but we shall not give up our campaign!

But then Plekhanov said that it was harmful to introduce political differences into the unions.... Yes, Plekhanov did say that stupid thing, and the S.R. gentlemen, naturally, were bound to pounce on it, as they always pounce on everything least worthy of imitation. However, we should not be guided by Plekhanov's words, but by the Congress resolution, which *cannot* be implemented without "introducing political differences". Here is a little example. The Congress resolution says that the trade unions should not be guided by "the theory of the harmony of interests between labour and capital". We Social-Democrats assert that the agrarian programme, which calls for equalised distribution of the land in a bourgeois society, is based on the theory of the harmony of interests between labour and capital.* We shall always declare our opposition to such a difference (or even a difference with monarchist-minded workers) being made the grounds for breaking the unity of a strike, etc., but we shall always "introduce this difference" into the workers' ranks in general, and into *all* workers' unions in particular.

Plekhanov's reference to eleven parties is just as foolish. First, Russia is not the only country where there are various socialist parties. Secondly, Russia has only two rival socialist parties of any importance—the S.D. and the S.R. parties, for it is quite ridiculous to lump together all the parties of the nationalities. Thirdly, the question of uniting the really socialist parties is quite a special one; by dragging it in Plekhanov confuses the issue. We must always and everywhere stand for the alignment of the unions with the socialist party of the working class, but the question as to which party in any given country, among any given nationality, is really socialist and really the party of the working class, is a special question, which is decided not by resolutions of international congresses, but by the outcome of the struggle between the national parties.

How erroneous Comrade Plekhanov's arguments on this subject are is shown in a most striking manner by his article in *Sovremenny Mir* No. 12, 1907. On page 55 Plekhanov quotes a statement by Lunacharsky that trade union neutrality is supported by the German revisionists. Plekhanov answers this statement as follows: "The revisionists say that the unions must be neutral, but understand by this that the unions must be used to fight orthodox Marxism." And Plekhanov concludes: "The elimination of trade union neutrality will not help matters at all. Even if we make the unions closely and formally dependent on the Party, and revisionist 'ideology' triumphs in the Party, the elimination of trade union neutrality will merely be a fresh victory for 'the critics of Marx'."

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* Even some S.R.s realise this now, and have thus taken a definite step towards Marxism. See the very interesting new book by Firsov and Jacoby, which we shall soon discuss in detail with readers of ***Proletary***.

This argument is a typical example of Plekhanov's usual method of dodging the issue and suppressing the essence of the dispute. If revisionist ideology really does triumph in the Party, then it will not be a socialist party of the working class. It is not at all a question of how the party takes shape, and what struggle and what splits occur in the process. It is a question of the fact that a socialist party and trade unions exist in every capitalist country, and it is our job to define the basic relations between them. The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably give rise to a striving to confine the unions to petty and narrow activity within the framework of the existing social order, to keep them away from any contact with socialism; and the neutrality theory is the ideological cover for these strivings of the bourgeoisie. In one way or another, the revisionists within the S.D. parties will always clear a way for themselves in capitalist society.

Of course, at the outset of the workers' political and trade union movements in Europe it was possible to uphold trade union neutrality as a means of widening the original field of proletarian struggle during the period when it was comparatively undeveloped and when the bourgeoisie exerted no systematic influence on the unions. At the present time it is quite indefensible, from the point of view of international Social-Democracy, to uphold trade union neutrality. One can only smile when reading Plekhanov's assurances that "even today, Marx would be in favour of trade union neutrality in Germany", especially when that kind of argument is based on a one-sided interpretation of a single "quotation" from Marx, while ignoring the sum and substance of Marx's statements and the whole spirit of his teachings.

"I stand for neutrality, understood in Bebel's and not the revisionist sense," writes Plekhanov. To talk like that means to swear by Bebel and still get stuck in the mud. Needless to say, Bebel is such a great authority in the international proletarian movement, such an experienced practical leader, a socialist so keenly alive to the requirements of the revolutionary struggle, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he climbed out of the mud himself when he happened to slip into it, and he dragged out those who were willing to follow his lead. Bebel was wrong when he joined Vollmar in defending the agrarian programme of the revisionists in Breslau (in 1895), when he insisted (in Essen) on making a distinction in principle between defensive and offensive wars, and when he was ready to elevate trade union "neutrality" to the level of a principle. We readily believe that if Plekhanov gets stuck in the mud only in Bebel's company, it will not happen to him often or for long. But we still think that Bebel should not be imitated when Bebel is wrong.

It is said—and Plekhanov makes a special point of it—that neutrality is necessary in order to unite all the workers who are beginning to see the need for improving their material conditions. But those who say this forget that the present stage of development of class contradictions inevitably introduces "political differences" even into the question of how this improvement is to be secured within the bounds of contemporary society. The theory of the neutrality of the trade unions as opposed to the theory of the need for close ties between them and revolutionary Social-Democracy, inevitably leads to preference being given to methods of securing this improvement that involve a blunting of the proletarian class struggle. A striking example of this (which, incidentally, is connected with the appraisal of one of the most interesting episodes in the modern labour movement) is to be found in *the very same* issue of *Sovremenny Mir* in which Plekhanov advocates neutrality. Side by side with Plekhanov, we find here Mr. E.P., extolling Richard Bell, the well-known English railwaymen's leader, who ended a dispute between the workers and the railway company by a compromise. Bell is described as the "soul of the whole railwaymen's movement". "There is not the slightest doubt," E.P. writes, "that thanks to his calm, well-considered, and consistent tactics, Bell has won the complete confidence of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the members of which are ready to follow his lead without hesitation" (*Sovremenny Mir* No. 12, page 75). This point of view is not accidental, but is essentially connected with the neutrality theory, which puts in the forefront unity of the workers for the improvement of their conditions, and not unity for a struggle that could promote the cause of proletarian emancipation.

But this point of view is not at all in accord with the views of the British socialists, who would probably be very much surprised to learn that the eulogisers of Bell write, without objection being raised, in the same journal as prominent Mensheviks like Plekhanov, Iordansky, and Co.

Justice,[47] the British Social-Democratic newspaper, in a leading article on November 16, commented as follows on Bell's agreement with the railway companies: "We cannot but agree with the almost universal trade union condemnation which has been pronounced upon this so-called treaty of peace ... it absolutely destroys the very reason of existence of the union.... This preposterous agreement... cannot be binding on the men, and the latter will do well to at once repudiate it." And in its next issue, that of November 23, Burnett, in an article entitled "Sold Again!", wrote the following about this agreement: "Three weeks ago the A.S.R.S. was one of the most powerful trade unions in the country; today it is reduced to the level of a mere benefit society.... All these changes have taken place not because the railwaymen have fought and lost, but because their leaders have deliberately or stupidly sold them to the railway bosses ere the fight began." And the editor added that a similar letter had been received from "a Midland Railway Company's wage-slave".

But perhaps this is the "ardour" of "too revolutionary" Social-Democrats? No. *The Labour Leader*,[48] organ of the moderate Independent Labour Party,[49] which does not even want to call itself socialist, in its issue of November 15 published a letter from a trade unionist railwayman in which, replying to the praise lavished on Bell by the entire capitalist press (from the radical *Reynolds News* to the Conservative *Times*), he stated that the settlement made by Bell was the "most contemptible one that has ever occurred in the history of Trade Unionism", and described Richard

Bell as the "Marshal Bazaine of the trade union movement". In the same issue another railwayman demands that "Mr. Bell ... should be called upon to explain" the nefarious settlement by which "the railwaymen ... are condemned to seven years' penal servitude...". And the editor of this moderate organ, in a leading article of the same issue, describes the settlement as "the Sedan of the British Trade Union movement". "Never has such an opportunity presented itself for a national manifestation of the power of organised labour." Among the workers there prevailed "unprecedented enthusiasm" and a desire to fight. The article concludes with a scathing comparison between the dire needs of the workers and the triumph of "Mr. Lloyd George [the Cabinet Minister who played the role of lackey to the capitalists] and Mr. Bell hastening to prepare banquets".

Only the extreme opportunists, the Fabians, members of a purely intellectualist organisation, *approved* the settlement; so that even *The New Age*, which sympathises with the Fabians, blushed for shame and was obliged to admit that while the Conservative bourgeois *Times* had published the Manifesto of the Fabian Society's Executive Committee in full, apart from these gentlemen "no socialist organisation, no trade union, and no prominent labour leader" (December 7th issue, p. 101) had declared in favour of the settlement.

Here you have a specimen of the application of the neutrality theory by Plekhanov's colleague, Mr. E. P. The question was one not of "political differences" but of improving the workers' conditions in existing society. The entire British bourgeoisie, the Fabians, and Mr. E. P. declared for "improvement" at the price of renouncing the struggle and submitting to the tender mercies of capital; all the socialists and trade unionist workers were for a collective struggle of the workers. Will Plekhanov now continue to advocate "neutrality", instead of a close alignment of the trade unions with the socialist party?

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Collected Works, Vol. 13,
pp. 460-69

From THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN RUSSIA TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

It is often thought in Russia that nationalisation of the land means removing the land from the sphere of commerce. This, undoubtedly, is the point of view of the majority of the advanced peasants and of ideologists of the peasantry. But this view is deeply fallacious. The very opposite is the case. Private property in land is an obstacle to the free investment of capital in land. Therefore, where the free renting of land from the state exists (and this is the essence of nationalisation in bourgeois society) the land is drawn *more energetically* into the sphere of commerce than is the case where private property in land prevails. There is much more freedom of capital investment in land, and freedom of competition in agriculture, where land is freely rented than where land is private property. Nationalisation of the land is, as it were, landlordism without the landlord. And what landlordism in the capitalist development of agriculture means is explained in the remarkably profound arguments of Marx in his *Theories of Surplus-Value*. I have quoted these arguments in my work on the agrarian programme mentioned above,[50] but in view of the importance of the question, I take the liberty of repeating them here.

In the paragraph on the historical conditions of Ricardo's theory of rent (*Theorien über den Mehrwert*, II. Band, 2. Teil, Stuttgart, 1905, S. 5-7), Marx says that Ricardo and Anderson "start out from the view, regarded as very strange on the Continent", viz., they presume that "no landed property exists as an obstacle to any investment of capital in the land". At first sight this would seem a contradiction, because it is precisely in England that feudal landed property is considered to have been preserved more completely than anywhere else. But Marx explains that it was in England of all countries that capital "dealt so ruthlessly with the traditional relations of agriculture". England is in this respect "the most revolutionary country in the world". "All historically inherited relations—not only the position of the villages but the very villages themselves, not only the habitations of the agricultural population, but this population itself, not only the ancient economic centres, but the very economy itself—have been ruthlessly swept away where they were in contradiction to the conditions of capitalist production in agriculture, or did not correspond to those conditions. The German [continues Marx] finds economic relations determined by the traditional common-land relations [*Feldmarken*], the position of economic centres, and particular conglomerations of the population. The Englishman finds that the historical conditions of agriculture have been progressively created by capital since the fifteenth century. The technical expression customary in the United Kingdom, the 'clearing of estates', does not occur in any continental country. But what does this 'clearing of estates' mean? It means that, without regard for the local population—which is driven away, for existing villages—which are levelled to the ground, for farm buildings—which are torn down, for the kind of agriculture—which is transformed at a stroke, being converted for example from tillage to pasture, all conditions of production, instead of being accepted as they are handed down by tradition, are historically *fashioned* in the form necessary under the circumstances for the most profitable investment of capital. To that extent, therefore, *no landed property exists*; it allows capital—the farmer—to manage freely, since it is only concerned about the money income. A Pomeranian landowner [Marx refers to Rodbertus, whose theory of rent he refutes brilliantly and in detail in this work], his mind full of his ancestral common lands, economic centres, and the agricultural collegium, etc., is quite likely, therefore, to hold up his hands in horror at Ricardo's 'unhistorical' views on the development of agricultural relations." As a matter of fact, "the English conditions are the only ones in which modern landed property, i.e., landed property *modified* by capitalist production, has developed adequately [in ideal perfection]. Here the English theory [i.e., Ricardo's theory of rent] is the classical one for the modern, i.e., capitalist mode of production."

In England, the clearing of the estates proceeded in revolutionary forms, accompanied by the violent break-up of peasant landowning.

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INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL IN WORLD POLITICS

The revolutionary movement in various European and Asian countries has latterly made itself felt so weightily that we see before us the fairly clear outlines of a new and incomparably higher stage in the international proletarian struggle.

There has been a counter-revolution in Persia[51]—a peculiar combination of the dissolution of Russia's First Duma, and of the Russian insurrection at the close of 1905. Shamefully defeated by the Japanese, the armies of the Russian tsar are taking their revenge by zealously serving the counter-revolution. The exploits of the Cossacks in mass shootings, punitive expeditions, manhandling and pillage in Russia are followed by their exploits in suppressing the revolution in Persia. That Nicholas Romanov, heading the Black-Hundred[52] landlords and capitalists scared by strikes and civil war, should be venting his fury on the Persian revolutionaries, is understandable. It is not the first time that Russia's Christian soldiers are cast in the role of international hangmen. That Britain is pharisaically washing her hands of the affair, and maintaining a demonstratively friendly neutrality towards the Persian reactionaries and supporters of absolutism, is a somewhat different matter. The British Liberal bourgeoisie, angered by the growth of the labour movement at home and frightened by the mounting revolutionary struggle in India, are more and more frequently, frankly and sharply demonstrating what *brutes* the highly "civilised" European "politicians", men who have passed through the high school of constitutionalism, can turn into when it comes to a rise in the mass struggle against capital and the capitalist colonial system, i.e., a system of enslavement, plunder and violence. The position of the Persian revolutionaries is a difficult one; theirs is a country which the masters of India on the one hand, and the counter-revolutionary Russian Government on the other, were on the point of dividing up between themselves. But the dogged struggle in Tabriz and the repeated swing of the fortunes of war to the revolutionaries who, it seemed, had been utterly defeated, are evidence that the Shah's bashi-bazouks, even though aided by Russian Lyakhovs and British diplomats, are encountering the most vigorous resistance from the people. A revolutionary movement that can offer armed resistance to attempts at restoration, that compels the attempters to call in foreign aid—such a movement cannot be destroyed. In these circumstances, even the fullest triumph of Persian reaction would merely be the prelude to fresh popular rebellion.

In Turkey, the revolutionary movement in the army, led by the Young Turks,[53] has achieved victory. True, it is only half a victory, or even less, since Turkey's Nicholas II has so far managed to get away with a promise to restore the celebrated Turkish constitution.[54] But in a revolution such half-victories, such forced and hasty concessions by the old regime, are the surest guarantee of new and much more decisive, more acute fluctuations of the civil war, involving broader masses of the people. And the school of civil war is never lost upon nations. It is a hard school, and its complete course *necessarily* includes victories for the counter-revolution, the unbridled licence of the infuriated reactionaries, the savage reprisals of the old government against the rebels, etc. But only incurable pedants and doddering mummies can moan over the fact that the nations have entered this very painful school. For it is one that teaches the oppressed classes how to wage civil war and how to carry the revolution to victory. It concentrates in the masses of contemporary slaves the hatred which downtrodden, benighted and ignorant slaves have always carried within them, and which leads to the supreme history-making feats of slaves who have realised the shame of their slavery.

In India lately, the native slaves of the "civilised" British capitalists have been a source of worry to their "masters".

There is no end to the acts of violence and plunder which goes under the name of the British system of government in India. Nowhere in the world—with the exception, of course, of Russia—will you find such abject mass poverty, such chronic starvation among the people. The most Liberal and Radical personalities of free Britain, men like John Morley—that authority for Russian and non-Russian Cadets, that luminary of "progressive" journalism (in reality, a lackey of capitalism)—become regular Genghis Khans when appointed to govern India, and are capable of sanctioning every means of "pacifying" the population in their charge, even to the extent of *flogging* political protestors! *Justice*, the little weekly of the British Social-Democrats, has been *banned* in India by these Liberal and "Radical" scoundrels like Morley. And when Keir Hardie, the British M.P. and leader of the Independent Labour Party, had the temerity to visit India and speak to the Indians about the most elementary democratic demands, the whole British bourgeois press raised a howl against this "rebel". And now the most influential British newspapers are in a fury about "agitators" who disturb the tranquillity of India, and are welcoming court sentences and administrative measures in the purely Russian, Plehve style to suppress democratic Indian publicists. But in India the street is beginning to stand up for *its* writers and political leaders. The infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak—he was sentenced to a long term of exile, the question in the British House of Commons the other day revealing that the Indian jurors had declared for acquittal and that the verdict had been passed *by the vote of the British jurors*!—this revenge against a democrat by the lackeys of the money-bag evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay. In India, too, the proletariat has already developed to conscious political mass struggle—and, that being the case, the Russian-style British regime in India is doomed! By their colonial plunder of Asian countries, the Europeans have succeeded in so steeling one of them, Japan, that she has gained great military victories, which have ensured her independent national development. There can be no doubt that the age-old plunder of India by the British, and the contemporary struggle of all these "advanced" Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, will *steel* millions, tens of millions of proletarians in Asia to wage a struggle against their oppressors which will be just as victorious as that of the Japanese. The class-conscious European worker now has comrades in Asia, and their number will grow by leaps and bounds.

In China, too, the revolutionary movement against the medieval order has made itself felt with particular force in recent months. True, nothing definite can yet be said about the present movement—there is such scanty information about it and such a spate of reports about revolts in various parts of the country. But there can be no doubt about the vigorous growth of the "new spirit" and the "European currents" that are stirring in China, especially since the Russo-Japanese war; and, consequently, the old-style Chinese revolts will inevitably develop into a conscious democratic movement. That some of the participants in colonial plunder are this time greatly concerned is borne out by the way the French are acting in Indo-China: they *helped* the "historic authorities" in China to put down the revolutionaries! They feared equally for the safety of their "own" Asian possessions bordering on China.

The French bourgeoisie, however, are concerned not only over their Asian possessions. The barricades at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, near Paris, the shooting down of the strikers who built these barricades (on Thursday, July 30 [17])—these events are renewed evidence of the sharpening of the class struggle in Europe. Clemenceau, the Radical, who governs France on behalf of the capitalists, is working with uncommon zeal to shatter the last lingering remnants of republican-bourgeois illusions among the proletariat. The shooting down of the workers by troops acting on the orders of a "Radical" government has, under Clemenceau, become almost more frequent than before. The French socialists have already dubbed Clemenceau "The Red" for this; and now, when his agents, gendarmes and generals have again shed the blood of the workers, the socialists recall the catchphrase once uttered by this ultra-progressive bourgeois republican to a workers' delegation: "You and I are on different sides of the barricade." Yes, the French proletariat and the most extreme bourgeois republicans have finally taken their place on opposite sides of the barricade. The French working class shed much blood to win and defend the republic, and now, on the basis of the fully established republican order, the decisive struggle between the propertied class and the working people is rapidly coming to a head. "It was not simply brutality," *L'Humanité*[55] wrote of the July 30 events, "it was part of a battle." The generals and the police were bent on provoking the workers and turning a peaceful unarmed demonstration into a massacre. But the troops that surrounded and attacked the unarmed strikers and demonstrators met with resistance, their action leading to the immediate erection of barricades, and to events which are agitating the whole of France. These barricades, *L'Humanité* says, were built of boards and were ludicrously ineffectual. But that is not important. What is important is that the Third Republic had eliminated the old habit of barricades, whereas now "Clemenceau is reviving that habit"—and he is just as candid about the matter as were "the butchers of June 1848, and Galliffet in 1871",[56] on the subject of civil war.

And the socialist press is not alone in recalling these great historic dates in connection with the events of July 30. The bourgeois press is furiously attacking the workers, accusing them of behaving as if they intended to start a socialist revolution. One paper cites a minor but characteristic incident indicative of the mood of both sides at the scene of action. When the workers were carrying a wounded comrade past General Virvaire, who directed the operations against the strikers, there were shouts from the demonstrators: "*Saluez*!" And the general of the bourgeois republic saluted his wounded enemy.

The sharpening of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is to be observed in all the advanced capitalist countries. The tendency is the same everywhere, though it manifests itself differently in accordance with the difference in historical conditions, political systems and forms of the labour movement. In America and Britain, where complete political liberty exists and where the proletariat has no revolutionary and socialist traditions that could be called living traditions, this sharpening of the struggle is expressed in the mounting movement against the trusts, in the extraordinary growth of socialism and the increasing attention it is getting from the propertied classes, and in workers' organisations, in some cases purely economic ones, that are beginning to enter upon systematic and independent proletarian political struggle. In Austria and Germany, and partly also in the Scandinavian countries, this sharpening of the class struggle shows itself in election campaigns, in party relationships, in the closer alignment of the bourgeoisie of all sorts and shades against their common enemy, the proletariat, and in the hardening of judicial and police persecution. Slowly but surely, the two opposing camps are building up their strength, consolidating their organisations, drawing apart with increasing sharpness in every sphere of public life, as if preparing, silently and intently, for the impending revolutionary battles. In the Latin countries, Italy and particularly France, the sharpening of the class struggle is expressed in especially stormy, violent, and occasionally forthright revolutionary outbreaks, when the pent-up hatred of the proletariat for its oppressors bursts out with unexpected force, and the "peaceful" atmosphere of parliamentary struggle gives way to episodes of real civil war.

The international revolutionary movement of the proletariat does not and cannot develop evenly and in identical forms in different countries. The full and all-round utilisation of every opportunity in every field of activity comes only as the result of the class struggle of the workers in the various countries. Every country contributes its own valuable and specific features to the common stream; but in each particular country the movement suffers from its own one-sidedness, its own theoretical and practical shortcomings of the individual socialist parties. On the whole we clearly see a tremendous step forward of international socialism, the rallying of million-strong armies of the proletariat in the course of a series of practical clashes with the enemy, and the approach of a decisive struggle with the bourgeoisie—a struggle for which the working class is far better *prepared* than in the days of the Commune, that last great proletarian insurrection.

And this step forward of the whole of international socialism, along with the sharpening of the revolutionary-democratic struggle in Asia, places the Russian revolution in a special and especially difficult position. The Russian revolution has a great international ally both in Europe and in Asia, but, at the same time, and *for that very reason*, it has not only a national, not only a Russian, but also an *international* enemy. Reaction against the mounting proletarian struggle is inevitable in all capitalist countries, and it is uniting the bourgeois governments of the whole world against every popular movement, against every revolution both in Asia and, particularly, in Europe. The opportunists in our Party, like the majority of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, are still dreaming of a bourgeois revolution in Russia that will "not alienate" or scare away the bourgeoisie, that will not engender "excessive" reaction, or lead to the seizure of power by the revolutionary classes. Vain hopes! A philistine utopia! The amount of inflammable material in all the advanced countries of the world is increasing so speedily, and the conflagration is so clearly spreading to most Asian countries which only yesterday were in a state of deep slumber, that the intensification of international bourgeois reaction and the aggravation of every single national revolution are absolutely inevitable.

The historical tasks of our revolution are not being performed by the forces of counter-revolution, and cannot be. The Russian bourgeoisie are necessarily gravitating more and more towards the international anti-proletarian and anti-democratic trend. It is not on liberal allies that the Russian proletariat should count. It must follow its own independent path to the complete victory of the revolution, basing itself on the need for a forcible solution of the agrarian question in Russia by the peasant masses themselves, helping them to overthrow the rule of the Black-Hundred landlords and the Black-Hundred autocracy, setting itself the task of establishing a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in Russia, and remembering that its struggle and its victories are inseparable from the international revolutionary movement. Less illusions about the liberalism of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (counter-revolutionary both in Russia and the world over). More attention to the growth of the international revolutionary proletariat!

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July 23 (August 5), 1908

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BRITISH AND GERMAN WORKERS DEMONSTRATE FOR PEACE

As is well known, in Britain and Germany a chauvinist campaign has long been conducted by the bourgeois press, especially the gutter press, in which these countries are incited against each other. Competition in the world market between British and German capitalists is becoming more and more bitter. Britain's former supremacy and her undivided ascendancy in the world market, have become a thing of the past. Germany is one of the capitalist countries that are developing particularly rapidly, and her manufactures are seeking markets abroad on an ever-growing scale. The struggle for colonies and the conflict of commercial interests have in capitalist society become one of the main causes of war. It is therefore not surprising that the capitalists of both countries consider war between Britain and Germany inevitable, and the military men on both sides deem it quite desirable. The British jingoes want to undermine the strength of a dangerous rival by smashing Germany's sea power while it is still immeasurably weaker than Britain's. The German Junkers and generals, headed by that Bourbon, Wilhelm II, are spoiling for a fight with Britain, hoping to be able to use their numerical superiority in land forces, and hoping that the clamour of military victories will stifle the growing discontent of the working masses and prevent the aggravation of the class struggle in Germany.

The British and German workers decided to come out publicly against the growing war danger. For a long time the labour press in both countries had been waging an unremitting struggle against chauvinism and militarism. But what was required now was some more imposing expression of the will of the working class than through the organs of the press. The British workers decided to send a delegation to Berlin to attend a grand demonstration that would declare the joint determination of the proletariat of both countries to wage war on war.

The demonstration took place in Berlin on Sunday, September 20 (7, old style). This time the British workers' representatives were able to address the proletariat of Berlin without let or hindrance. Two years before, when J. Jaurès had wanted to speak to the German workers on behalf of the French working class at a Social-Democratic mass meeting in Berlin to protest against the bourgeois jingoes, the German Government banned him. This time it did not venture to eject the delegates of the British proletariat.

A mammoth rally of working men was held in one of Berlin's biggest halls. About 5,000 people immediately packed the place, and an overflow of many thousands occupied the surrounding grounds and the street. Stewards wearing red armbands kept order. Comrade Legien, the well-known leader of the German trade unions (called "free", i.e., actually Social-Democratic unions), greeted the British delegation on behalf of the entire politically and industrially organised working class of Germany. He said that fifty years ago French and British workers had demonstrated on behalf of peace. At that time those pioneer socialists were not backed by the organised masses. Today Britain and Germany together had an army of $4\frac{1}{3}$ million organised workers. It was on behalf of this army that the British delegates and the Berlin rally now spoke, declaring that the decision of war or peace lay in the hands of the working class.

In his speech in reply, the British workers' delegate Maddison condemned the jingo slander campaign conducted by the bourgeoisie, and handed over an Address from the Workers of Britain to the Workers of Germany, signed by 3,000 workmen. Among the signatories, he said, were representatives of both trends in the British labour movement (i.e., both Social-Democrats and adherents of the Independent Labour Party, who do not yet hold any consistent socialist point of view). The Address pointed out that wars serve the interests of the propertied classes. The masses of the workers bear all the burdens of war. The propertied classes derive benefit from national calamities. Let the workers unite to fight militarism, to ensure peace!

After other British delegates and a representative of the German Social-Democratic Party, Richard Fischer, had spoken, the meeting closed with the unanimous adoption of a resolution branding the "selfish and short-sighted policy of the ruling and exploiting classes" and expressing readiness to act in accordance with the resolution of the International Congress in Stuttgart, i.e., to fight war by all ways and means. The meeting broke up in an orderly manner amidst the singing of the workers' *Marseillaise*. There were no street demonstrations. The Berlin police and local military authorities were disappointed. It is characteristic of the regime in Germany that the most peaceful demonstration of the workers had to have a police and military demonstration to accompany it. The Berlin garrison was mobilised. Detachments of troops were stationed in different parts of the city in accordance with a strict plan, mostly in such a way that their hiding-places and numbers could not be easily detected. Police units patrolled the streets and squares in the vicinity of the meeting hall, particularly the road leading from there to the royal palace. The latter was ringed with police in plain clothes and troops concealed in house yards. An intricate system of police pickets was organised; groups of policemen loitered at street corners; police officers were detailed to all "important" spots; police cyclists acted as scouts and kept the military authorities informed on every step the "enemy" made; bridges and canal crossings were put under triple guard. "They stood watch over the threatened monarchy", sarcastically wrote *Vorwärts*, commenting on all these measures taken by the government of Wilhelm II.

It was a rehearsal, we add for our part. Wilhelm II and the German bourgeoisie were rehearsing military combat with an insurgent proletariat. Such rehearsals are undoubtedly and in any case useful to both the masses of workers and to the soldiers. *Ça ira* (it will be a success!), as the French workers' song says. Repeated rehearsals are leading, maybe very slowly as yet, but very surely, to the great historical climax.

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From MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST BUREAU[57]

The whole of the next day was taken up with the meeting of the International Socialist Bureau. The first item on the agenda, namely, the affiliation of the British Labour Party, occupied the whole of the morning session. According to the Rules of the International, organisations eligible for membership are, first, socialist parties which recognise the class struggle, and secondly, working-class organisations whose standpoint is that of the class struggle (i.e., trade unions). The Labour Party recently formed in the British House of Commons does not openly call itself socialist, and does not expressly and definitely recognise the principle of the class struggle (which, be it said in parenthesis, the British Social-Democrats call upon it to do). Needless to say this Labour Party was admitted to the International in general and to the Stuttgart Socialist Congress in particular, because, as a matter of fact, this Party is an organisation of a mixed type, standing between the two types defined in Clauses 1 and 2 of the Rules of the International, and embodying the political representation of the British trade unions. Nevertheless, the question of the affiliation of this Party was raised, and raised by the Party itself, in the person of the so-called Independent Labour Party (the I.L.P., as the British call it), which is one of the two subsections of the British section of the International. The other subsection is the Social-Democratic Federation.

The Independent Labour Party demanded the *direct* recognition of the Labour Party as an affiliated organisation of the International. Its delegate Bruce Glasier urged the enormous significance of this representation in Parliament of hundreds of thousands of organised workers who were steadily and surely moving towards socialism. He was very contemptuous of principles, formulas and catechisms. Kautsky, in reply to him, dissociated himself from this attitude of contempt towards the principles and ultimate aim of socialism, but wholly supported the affiliation of the Labour Party as a party waging the class struggle in practice. Kautsky moved the following resolution:

"Whereas by previous resolutions of the International Congresses, all organisations adopting the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle and recognising the necessity for political action have been accepted for membership, the International Bureau declares that the British Labour Party is admitted to International Socialist Congresses, because, while not expressly [*ausdrücklich*] accepting the proletarian class struggle, in practice the Labour Party conducts this struggle, and adopts its standpoint, inasmuch as the Party is organised independently of the bourgeois parties." Kautsky was supported by the Austrians, by Vaillant of the French group, and, as the voting showed, by the majority of the small nations. The opposition came first of all from Hyndman, the representative of the British Social-Democratic Federation, who demanded that the *status quo* be maintained until the Labour Party expressly recognised the principle of the class struggle and of socialism; then from Roussel (the second French delegate and a follower of Guesde), Rubanovich of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and Avramov, the delegate of the revolutionary wing of the Bulgarian socialists.

I took the floor in order to associate myself with the first part of Kautsky's resolution. It was impossible, I argued, to refuse to admit the Labour Party, i.e., the parliamentary representation of the trade unions, since Congresses had previously admitted all trade unions whatever, even those which had allowed themselves to be represented by bourgeois parliamentarians. But, I said, the second part of Kautsky's resolution is wrong, because *in practice* the Labour Party is not a party really independent of the Liberals, and does not pursue a fully independent class policy. I therefore proposed an amendment that the end of the resolution, beginning with the word "because", should read as follows:

"because it [the Labour Party] represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a *socialist* workers' party". I submitted this amendment to the Bureau, but Kautsky would not accept it, stating in his next speech that the International Bureau could not adopt decisions based on "expectations". But the main struggle was between the supporters and the opponents of Kautsky's resolution as a whole. When it was about to be voted on, Adler proposed that it be divided into two parts. This was done, and both parts were carried by the International Bureau: the first with three against and one abstention, and the second with four against and one abstention. Thus Kautsky's motion became the decision of the Bureau. Rubanovich abstained on both votes. Let me add that Victor Adler, who spoke after me and before Kautsky's second speech, replied to me in the following manner—I am quoting from the Belgian socialist organ *Le Peuple*, which gave the most detailed and exact reports of the sessions: "Lenin's proposal is tempting [*séduisante*, Adler said: *verlockend*, enticing], but it cannot make us forget that the Labour Party is now outside the bourgeois parties. It is not for us to judge how it did this. We recognise the fact of progress."

Such was the nature of the debate at the International Bureau on the question under discussion. I shall now take the liberty to deal in greater detail with this debate, in order to explain the position that I took up to the readers of *Proletary*. The arguments advanced by V. Adler and K. Kautsky failed to convince me, and I still think they are wrong. By stating in his resolution that the Labour Party "does not expressly accept the proletarian class struggle", Kautsky undoubtedly voiced a certain "expectation", a certain "judgement" as to what the policy of the Labour Party is now and what that policy should be. But Kautsky expressed this *indirectly*, and in such a way that it amounted to an assertion which, first, is incorrect in substance, and secondly, provides a basis for misrepresenting his *idea*. That by separating in *Parliament* (not during the elections! not in its whole policy! not in its propaganda and agitation!) from the bourgeois parties, the Labour Party in Britain is taking the first step towards socialism and towards a class policy of the proletarian mass organisations is indisputable. This is not an "expectation" but a fact, the very fact which compels us to admit the Labour Party into the International, since we have already accepted the trade unions. Finally, it is precisely such a formulation that would make hundreds of thousands of British workers, who undoubtedly respect the decisions of the International but have not yet become full socialists, ponder once again over the question why they are regarded as having taken only the *first* step, and what the *next* steps along this road should be. My formulation does not contain even the shadow of a claim that the International should undertake to solve the concrete and detailed problems of a national labour movement, should undertake to determine when the next steps should be taken, and what they should be. But that further steps are necessary in general must be admitted, in relation to a party which does not expressly and clearly accept the principle of the class struggle. Kautsky in his resolution acknowledged this indirectly, instead of doing so directly. It looked as if the International was certifying that the Labour Party was *in practice* waging a consistent class struggle, as if it was sufficient for a workers' organisation to form a separate labour group in Parliament in order *in its entire conduct* to become independent of the bourgeoisie!

On this question Hyndman, Roussel, Rubanovich and Avramov undoubtedly occupied a still more incorrect position (which Rubanovich did not rectify but confused by his abstention on both parts of the resolution). When Avramov declared that to admit the Labour Party would be to encourage opportunism, he expressed a glaringly wrong view. One need only recall Engels's letters to Sorge. For a number of years Engels strongly insisted that the British Social-Democrats, led by Hyndman, were committing an error by acting like sectarians, failing to link themselves with the unconscious but powerful class instinct of the trade unions, and by turning Marxism into a "dogma", whereas it should be a "guide to action". When there exist objective conditions which retard the growth of the political consciousness and class independence of the proletarian masses, one must be able patiently and steadfastly to work hand in hand with them, making no concessions in principles but not refraining from activity *right in the midst* of the proletarian masses. These lessons of Engels's have been corroborated by the subsequent development of events, when the British trade unions, insular, aristocratic, philistinely selfish, and hostile to socialism, which have produced a number of outright traitors to the working class who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie for ministerial posts (like the scoundrel John Burns), have nevertheless begun *moving towards* socialism, awkwardly, inconsistently, in zigzag fashion, but still moving towards socialism. Only the blind can fail to see that socialism is now growing apace among the working class in Britain, that socialism is *once again* becoming a mass movement in that country, that the social revolution is approaching in Great Britain.

The International would undoubtedly have acted wrongly had it not directly and resolutely expressed its complete sympathy with this vast step forward by the mass labour movement in Britain, and voiced its encouragement of the great turn that had begun in the cradle of capitalism. But it does not in the least follow from this that the Labour Party can already be recognised as a party in practice independent of the bourgeoisie, as a party waging the class struggle, as a socialist party, etc. It was necessary to rectify one undoubted error committed by the British Social-Democratic Federation, but there was no need to give even a shadow of encouragement to *other, undoubted and not less important* errors of the British opportunists who lead the so-called Independent Labour Party. That these leaders are opportunists is indisputable. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the I.L.P., even proposed at Stuttgart that Clause 2 of the Rules of the International be so amended as to require, in place of the recognition of the class struggle, only the good faith (*bona fides*) of labour associations, for affiliation to the International. Kautsky himself immediately detected the opportunist note in the words of Bruce Glasier and dissociated himself from them—*in his speech at the Bureau*, but unfortunately not in his resolution. The speech at the Bureau was delivered before a dozen persons, but the resolution was written for millions.

I have before me the newspapers published by both trends of British socialism containing comments on the meeting of the International Bureau. The organ of the Independent (ahem! ahem!) Labour Party, the *Labour Leader*, rejoices, and *openly declares* to tens of thousands of British workers that the International Socialist Bureau not only recognised the Labour Party (that is true, and it had to be done) but also "*vindicated the policy of the I.L.P.*"

(*Labour Leader*, October 16, 1908, p. 665). This is not true. The Bureau did *not* vindicate it. This is an illegitimate, opportunist interpretation of a slight awkwardness in Kautsky's resolution. This slight awkwardness is beginning to bear rather abundant fruit; on top of this comes a poor translation: no wonder the Italians say that translators are traducers (*traduttori—tradittori*). The official translations of the Bureau resolutions into the three official languages have not been published yet, and it is not known when they will appear. Kautsky's resolution states that the Labour Party "adopts the standpoint of the class struggle" (end of the resolution; in the original: *sich ... auf seinen, d.h. des Klassenkampfs, Boden stellt*), which, in the translation of the British *Social-Democrats*, reads: "places itself in consequence on the ground of international socialism". In the translation of the British *opportunists* (I.L.P.) it reads: "*adopts the position of international socialism*". (Ibid.) Now try and rectify such mistakes when you carry on agitation among the British workers!

Far be it from me to accuse Bruce Glasier of distorting the resolution. I am sure he could not have had that in mind. And this is not so important. What is important is that the *spirit* of Kautsky's resolution, precisely the *second* part of it, be applied in practical mass work. On the same page of the *Labour Leader*, another member of the I.L.P., describing his impressions of the Bureau meeting and of the mass meeting in Brussels, complains that at the meeting "the emphasis on the ideal and ethical aspect of socialism... was almost entirely absent", an aspect which, he averred, was always emphasised at I.L.P. meetings. "*In its stead we had ... the barren and uninspiring dogma of the class war.*"

When Kautsky was writing his resolution about the British, he had in mind, not a British "Independent", but a German Social-Democrat....

Justice, the organ of the British Social-Democrats, publishes bitter words from Hyndman against the majority of the Bureau as "whittlers-away of principle to suit the convenience of trimmers". "I have not the slightest doubt," writes Hyndman, "that if the British Labour Party had been told plainly that they either had to accept socialist principles ... or keep away altogether, they would very quickly have decided to bring themselves into line with the International Socialist Party." And in another article in the same issue, *facts* are quoted to prove that *in practice* the Independent Labour Party got some of its members elected under a *jumbled* flag of both Liberalism and the Independent Labour Party (Liberal-Labour Alliance), and that some of the "Independents" *had the backing of the Liberal Minister, John Burns* (*Justice*, October 17, 1908, pp. 4 and 7).

If Hyndman carries out the plan he speaks of, namely, that of raising this question again at the International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen (1910), then the R.S.D.L.P. must try to get Kautsky's resolution amended.

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October 16 (29), 1908

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pp. 233-39

CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Many European socialist parties have taken advantage of the Easter holidays (April 16, N.S.) to hold their conferences: the French, Belgian, Dutch (its opportunist section), the British Social-Democratic Party, and the British Independent Labour Party. We propose to draw the attention of our readers to some items discussed at the conferences of the two last-mentioned parties.

The 31st Annual Conference of the British Social-Democratic Party (S.D.P.) was held in Coventry. The most interesting item discussed was that of "armaments and foreign policy". It is well known that Britain and Germany have been arming very intensively during the past few years. Competition between these two countries in the world market is becoming increasingly acute. The danger of a military conflict is approaching more and more formidably. The bourgeois jingoist press of both countries is raining millions upon millions of inflammatory articles upon the masses, inciting them against the "enemy", howling about the inevitable danger of a "German invasion" or of a "British attack" and clamouring for increased armaments. The socialists of Britain and Germany, and also of France (whom Britain would be particularly glad to drag into war in order to have a continental land army against Germany) are devoting much attention to the threatening war, fighting with might and main against bourgeois chauvinism and armaments, and doing all they can to explain to the most backward sections of the proletariat and of the petty bourgeoisie what misfortunes ensue from a war which serves exclusively the interests of the bourgeoisie.

There were sad exceptions to this among the socialists, several of whom were prominent leaders of the British S.D.P., among them Hyndman. The latter allowed himself to be scared by the screams of the British bourgeois press about the "German menace", and went so far as to assert that Britain had to arm for defence, that she had to have a powerful navy, that Wilhelm was the aggressive party.

True, Hyndman encountered opposition, in fact very strong opposition, within the S.D.P. itself. A number of resolutions from the branches were emphatically against him.

The Coventry Congress, or Conference—to use the English term, which does not correspond in meaning to the Russian "konferentsia"—had to settle the issue. A resolution emphatically opposing any kind of jingoist point of view was proposed by the Central Hackney branch (Hackney, a district in North-East London). In its report on the Conference, *Justice*, the central organ of the S.D.P., quotes only the end of what it terms a "lengthy" resolution, calling for a determined struggle against all increases in armaments, and opposing all colonial and financial aggression. Zelda Kahan, in supporting the resolution, emphasised that during the last forty years Britain had been the aggressor, that Germany would not gain by making Britain a German province; and that no such danger existed. "The British Navy," she said, "is kept to maintain the Empire. Never had the S.D.P. made a bigger and more terrible mistake than in identifying the Party with the jingoist warmongers. As a consequence of this mistake," said Kahan, "the British Social-Democrats have placed themselves outside the international movement."

The entire Party Executive Committee, including Harry Quelch—we have to confess with shame—supported Hyndman. The "amendment" they moved declared no more nor less than the following: "This Conference holds that the maintenance of an adequate navy for national defence" is an "immediate object"!... Then, of course, it goes on to repeat all the "good old words"—about combating imperialist policy, about war against capitalism, etc. All this honey, of course, was spoiled by *a spoonful of tar*, by the phrase recognising the need for an "adequate" navy, a phrase that is bourgeois both in its evasiveness and in its pure chauvinism. This is in 1911, a time when the British naval budget clearly reveals a tendency to unlimited growth; this is in a country whose navy "defends and protects the Empire", i.e., India included, with its population of nearly 300,000,000 that is being plundered and outraged by British bureaucrats, where "enlightened" British statesmen, like the liberal and "radical" Morley, sentence natives to *transportation* or inflict *corporal punishment* for political offences!

The miserable sophistry Quelch had to resort to may be seen from the following passage in his speech (as reported in *Justice*, which defends Hyndman!)... "If we believe in national autonomy, we must have national defence and that defence must be adequate, or it is useless. We are opposed to imperialism, whether British or German; the small nationalities under Prussian rule hate her despotism, and the small nations threatened by her regard the British Navy and German Social-Democracy as their only hope...."

How quickly those who step on the slippery slope of opportunism slide to the bottom! The British Navy, which helps to enslave India (not a very "small" nation), is placed *on a par* with German Social-Democracy as a champion of national liberty.... Zelda Kahan was right when she said that never yet had British Social-Democracy so disgraced itself. Its sectarian character, noted and condemned long ago by Engels,[58] had never before been so clearly revealed as it was by the *ease* with which even men like Quelch can *go over* to the chauvinists.

The voting on the resolution was evenly divided: 28 for the Executive Committee and 28 against. In order to win a deplorable victory—Hyndman and Quelch had to demand a branch vote, which secured them 47 votes against 33.

Some members of the Social-Democratic Party have voiced a most emphatic protest against chauvinism in their ranks; there has emerged a very strong minority ready to wage a serious struggle. The situation in the Independent Labour Party is worse: there opportunism is no rarity. There the question of whether socialists and the workers should support armaments is debated quite calmly in "discussion" articles in the official organ of the Party, *The Labour Leader* (No. 16, April 21, 1911).

The London correspondent of *Vorwärts* justly remarked that the best criticism of the position of the S.D.P. was an article in the *extremely jingoist Daily Mail* which *praised* the wisdom of the Social-Democratic leaders. He quotes the beginning of the article in that newspaper as saying: "It is encouraging to learn that, however extravagant some of the fallacies and impossible some of the ideals of the Social-Democratic Party in this country, there is at least one supremely important question on which that Party is guided by reason and common sense."

The really gratifying feature of the Birmingham Conference of the I.L.P. was that from its ranks firm and determined voices were heard protesting against the opportunist policy, the policy of dependence upon the Liberals pursued by this party in general, and by the party leader, Ramsay MacDonald, in particular. In reply to the reproach that the Labour members say little about socialism in the House of Commons, MacDonald said with virginal opportunist innocence that Parliament was hardly the place for "propaganda speeches". "The great function of the House of Commons," he said, "is to translate into legislation the socialism that is preached in the country." The speaker forgot all about the difference between bourgeois social reform and socialism! He was prepared to expect socialism from a bourgeois Parliament....

Leonard Hall pointed out in his speech that the I.L.P. had been formed in 1892 for the purpose of killing the old Labour Electoral Association which was merely a wing of liberalism. They had buried the corpse (after killing the Association), but it seemed to have revived in the Labour Party. He added that the leader of the Party was pursuing this policy in his speeches, letters and books.

Another I.L.P. member, George Lansbury, M.P., sharply criticised the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party for its dependence upon the Liberals and its fear of "endangering" the Liberal government. Lansbury said that more than once he had been so ashamed of the conduct of the Labour members that he had nearly resigned. He went on to say that all the time the Liberals tried to keep the House busy with minor questions and that Labour members were unable to win independence for themselves. "I have never known a time," said Lansbury, "when both Liberals and Tories had not some great question to hide the poverty question. I am in the House of Commons with the picture before me of those men and women, who night after night toiled in the slums of Bow and Bromley [poor districts in the East End of London] to send me there. They worked for me because they thought I was different from the Liberals and Tories.... They sent me to face the question of poverty, poverty, poverty.... I appeal to you," he said, addressing the Conference, "to keep a solid party in the House of Commons absolutely distinct from the convenience of Liberals and Tories. We must show no more mercy to the Liberals when they do wrong than to the Tories.... The men and women who toil and suffer have nothing to hope for from either Liberals or Tories; their only hope lies in, and salvation can come from, their organised effort...." Let us "make it clear to the men and women of the slums that even in Parliament we are true to what we say outside, namely, that Liberals and Tories are the enemies of the people and socialism their only hope".

Lansbury's speech was interrupted by thunders of applause, and when he finished he received a real ovation. In Germany such speeches are an everyday occurrence. In Britain they are a novelty. And when such speeches are beginning to be delivered, when worker delegates at the Conference of the Independent Labour Party (unfortunately, very frequently independent of socialism, but dependent upon the Liberals) applaud such speeches, then we have the right to conclude that *in Britain*, too, the spirit of proletarian struggle is gaining the upper hand over the diplomacy of opportunist parliamentarians like MacDonald. (Let us add in parenthesis that this MacDonald recently sent the Italian reformists an expression of his complete sympathy with their readiness to join a bourgeois Cabinet, and his dislike for "dry theory".)

The speeches of Hall, Lansbury, and others have not changed the policy of the I.L.P. MacDonald remains at the head of the Party, and its policy will continue to be opportunist. The bourgeois influence upon the proletariat is strong—especially in democratic countries. But these speeches do not pass without leaving a trace, they undermine the influence of the bourgeoisie and of the opportunists. When the British people get a daily newspaper going (and *both* parties are seriously thinking about this), such and only such speeches will reach the minds and hearts of the working class. The Liberals of all countries, Russia included, are rejoicing and laughing now at the sight of the predominance of opportunism in the British labour movement. But "he laughs best who laughs last".

Zvezda No. 18, April 16, 1911

Collected Works, Vol. 17, pp. 173-78

OLD TRUTHS THAT ARE EVER NEW

The incidents that prevented the workers' delegates from attending the second congress of factory doctors in Moscow are known to readers from press reports. [59] We are not in a position to dwell here on the details of those incidents or to comment upon their significance. We shall merely note the instructive reflections that appeared in *Rech* of April 14. i.e., on the day the congress opened, in a leading article which was written on the eve of these events.

> "It is to be regretted," wrote the organ of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, "that outside obstacles are placed in the way of such participation [participation by representatives of the workers]. The fate likely to befall some too fiery speakers is all too well known. As a result, the representatives of the workers insist on talking about their difficulties in concentrating on special questions, the impossibility of organising proper representation at the congress, about the obstacles put in the way of their organisations, and many other things of a like nature which are far removed from the programme of the congress and the discussion of which distracts attention from the questions on the agenda and sometimes leads to undesirable consequences. The charged atmosphere explains also the intolerance shown by workers' representatives to 'bourgeois' speakers, to all the measures taken by the government, and to the possibility of collaboration with representatives of other social groups."

This whole tirade is a characteristic example of feeble lamentations whose impotence is explained, not by the chance composition or by any special features of the given liberal party, of the given question, etc., but by causes of a more profound nature—by the actual conditions in which the liberal bourgeoisie in general finds itself in twentieth-century Russia. The liberal bourgeoisie is longing for the kind of "regime" under which it could have dealings with workers not likely "to make too fiery speeches" and who are fairly "tolerant" in their attitude towards the bourgeoisie, towards the idea of *collaboration with the bourgeoisie*, and "*to all* the measures taken by the government". It is longing for a regime under which these unassuming workers "collaborating" with it could "concentrate on the special questions" of social policy and would meekly agree to confine themselves to patching up the threadbare cloak of bourgeois solicitude for "the younger brother".[60] In a word, the Russian liberals are longing for something like the present regime in England or in France, *as distinct* from that of Prussia. In England and France the bourgeoisie holds full sway, and it exercises its rule practically (with few exceptions) by itself, whereas in Prussia it is the feudal landowners, the Junkers, and the monarchist militarists, who are in the ascendancy. In England and France the bourgeoisie makes particularly frequent, free and wide use of the services of men of proletarian origin or traitors to the cause of the proletariat (John Burns, Briand) in the capacity of "collaborators" who "concentrate", undisturbed, "on special questions" and who teach the working class to maintain an attitude of "tolerance" to the rule of capital.

There is not the slightest doubt that the English and French systems are much more democratic than the Prussian; that they are much more favourable for the struggle of the working class, and have to a much greater degree eliminated the medieval institutions which distract the attention of the working class from its principal and real adversary. There is not the slightest doubt, therefore, that support for all aspirations to remodel our country along Anglo-French, rather than Prussian, lines is in the interests of the Russian workers. But we must not confine ourselves to this indisputable conclusion, as is so often done. Only here does the disputed question or questions begin—the dispute is with democrats of various shades.

The aspirations must be given support. To support him who is weak and who wavers, it is necessary to sustain him with something more solid and to dispel the illusions that prevent him from seeing his weakness and understanding its causes. One does not give support to the urge towards bourgeois democracy by strengthening those illusions and by adding one's voice to the feeble lamentations of the weak, inconsistent and wavering adherents of democracy, but, on the contrary, one deprives that urge of its force. The bourgeoisie of England and then of France, in the middle of the seventeenth and the late eighteenth century respectively, did not lament the "intolerance" of the younger brother, and made no wry faces over the "too fiery speakers" among the representatives of that younger brother, but they themselves supplied the *most* fiery speakers (and not only speakers) who inculcated a feeling of contempt for the advocacy of "tolerance", for weak *lamentations*, for vacillation and irresolution. Among those fiery speakers there were men who, in the course of centuries, have served as beacons and guides to humanity, despite historical limitations and often the naïveté of their ideas regarding the means of salvation from every kind of misfortune.

The German bourgeoisie, like the Russian, also lamented the fact that the speakers representing the "younger brother" were "too fiery"—and it left behind it in history a model of abasement, infamy, and flunkeyism for which it was rewarded with kicks administered by the "Junkers". The difference in the attitude of the two bourgeoisies was not due, of course, to the "characteristics" of different "races", but to the different levels of economic and political development which caused one of them to fear the "younger brother", and made it vacillate impotently between deprecating the violence of feudalism and censuring the "intolerance" of the workers.

Those are old truths. But they are ever new, and remain so as long as we are treated, in publications issued by people who profess to be Marxists, to lines like the following:

> "The failure of the movement of 1905-06 was not due to the 'excesses' of the Lefts, for those 'excesses' were themselves the consequence of the aggregate of a large number of causes; nor was it due to 'treachery' on the part of the bourgeoisie who, everywhere in the West, had 'betrayed' at the crucial moment; it was due to the fact that there was no clearly defined bourgeois party which could supersede the obsolete bureaucracy at the helm of government, and which would be strong enough economically and sufficiently democratic to enjoy the support of the people." And a few lines further on: "...the weakness of the urban bourgeois democrats, who should have become the political centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry..." (*Nasha Zarya* No. 3, p. 62, article by Mr. V. Levitsky).

Mr. V. Levitsky is more consistent in his renunciation of the idea of "the hegemony of the proletariat" ("the urban bourgeois democrats", and no other group, "*should have* *become* the centre of attraction"!), or he expresses his ideas more boldly, definitely and consistently than Mr. Potresov, who brushed up his article in *The Social Movement* to comply with Plekhanov's ultimatums.

Mr. V. Levitsky argues just like a liberal. He is an inconsistent liberal, despite his use of many Marxist phrases. He has no idea that an entirely different social category, not the urban bourgeois democrats, *should have become* the "centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry". He forgets that this "should" *was* a reality during momentous historical periods in England and in France, as well as in Russia—they were of momentous significance although they were of short duration in the latter country; in the two first-named countries it was for the most part the democratic, ultra-democratic and "too fiery" plebeian sections that united the various elements of the "lower classes".

Mr. V. Levitsky forgets that even in those brief periods of history when these "lower classes" played the role of "centres of attraction for the democratic peasantry", when they succeeded in *wresting* this role from the liberal bourgeoisie, they did exercise a decisive influence in determining *the degree* of democracy the country in question was to enjoy in the succeeding decades of so-called peaceful development. During the brief periods of *their* hegemony, these "lower classes" trained their bourgeoisie and remoulded it to such an extent that subsequently it was anxious to beat a retreat, but *was unable* to go farther in this retrograde movement than, say, an upper chamber in France, or certain departures from the principles of democratic elections, and so on, and so forth.

This idea, confirmed by the historical experience of *all* European countries—the idea that in epochs of bourgeois change (or, more correctly, of bourgeois revolution) the bourgeois democracy of each country is moulded one way or another, assumes one form or another, becomes trained in one tradition or another, and accepts one or another minimum of democracy, depending on the extent to which, in the decisive moments of the history of the nation, *hegemony* passes *not* to the bourgeoisie *but* to the "lower classes", to the "plebeian" elements, as was the case in the eighteenth century, or to the proletariat in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—this idea is foreign to Mr. V. Levitsky. The idea of the hegemony of the proletariat constitutes one of the fundamental tenets of Marxism; and the liquidators' departure from these tenets (or even their indifference to them) is a profound source of quite a number of their irreconcilable fundamental differences with the opponents of the liquidationist trend.

Every capitalist country passes through an era of bourgeois revolutions which produces a definite degree of democracy, a definite constitutional or parliamentary regime, a definite degree of independence, love of liberty, and initiative among the "lower classes" in general and the proletariat in particular, a definite tradition permeating the entire political and social life of the country. The particular degree of democracy, or the particular tradition, depends on whether, in the *decisive* moments, the hegemony belongs to the bourgeoisie or to those at the other end of the scale; it depends on whether it is the former or the latter which (again in those decisive moments) constitutes the "centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry" and, in general, for all intermediary democratic groups and sections.

Mr. V. Levitsky is a past master at coining brilliant formulations which have the effect of at once revealing the ideological foundations of liquidationism, bringing them out clearly and in bold relief. Such was his famous formula: "*Not* hegemony, *but* a class party", which—translated into plain language—means: not Marxism, but Brentanoism [61] (social-liberalism). The two formulas noted in the present article—namely: "the urban bourgeois democrats *should have become* the centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry" and "the failure ... was due to the fact that there was no clearly defined bourgeois party"—are, undoubtedly, destined to become just as famous.

Zvezda No. 25, June 11, 1911

Collected Works, Vol. 17, pp. 211-15

HYNDMAN ON MARX

The voluminous memoirs of one of the founders and leaders of the British Social-Democratic Party, Henry Mayers Hyndman, have recently been published. The book of nearly five hundred pages is entitled *The Record of an Adventurous Life** and represents the reminiscences, written in lively fashion, of the author's political activity and of the "celebrities" he knew. Hyndman's book provides a great deal of interesting material for the characterisation of British socialism and for an appraisal of certain important problems affecting the entire international working-class movement.

We therefore think it timely to devote a few articles to Hyndman's book, particularly in view of the fact that the Right-wing Cadet *Russkiye Vedomosti* published (on October 14) an article by the liberal Dioneo, which provides an admirable example of how the liberals throw light, or rather darkness, on these problems.

Let us start with Hyndman's reminiscences of Marx. Hyndman made his acquaintance only in 1880, when he apparently knew very little about Marx's teachings and about socialism in general. It is characteristic of British relationships that, born in 1842, Hyndman, until the moment we are speaking of, was a "democrat" of an indefinite hue who had contacts and sympathies with the Conservative Party (Tories). Hyndman turned to socialism after reading *Capital* (in the French translation) during one of his numerous voyages to America between 1874 and 1880.

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* *The Record of an Adventurous Life*, by Henry Mayers Hyndman, London (Macmillan & Co.), 1911.

Accompanied by Karl Hirsch, Hyndman, on his way to visit Marx, mentally compared him to—Mazzini!

The level at which Hyndman makes this comparison can be judged from the fact that he describes Mazzini's influence on those around him as "personal and individually ethical", and considered Marx's influence to be "almost wholly intellectual and scientific". Hyndman went to Marx as to a "supreme analytical genius" and was eager to learn from him; what attracted him in Mazzini was his character and his "elevation of thought and conduct". But that Marx "was far the more powerful mind cannot be disputed". Nor can it be disputed that Hyndman very poorly understood in 1880 (and does not quite understand even now—but of that later) the difference between a bourgeois democrat and a socialist.

"The first impression of Marx as I saw him," writes Hyndman, "was that of a powerful, shaggy, untamed old man, ready, not to say eager, to enter into conflict, and rather suspicious himself of immediate attack. Yet his greeting to us was cordial and his first remarks to me, after I had told him what a great pleasure and honour I felt it to be to shake hands with the author of *Capital*, were agreeable enough; for he told me that he had read my articles on India* with pleasure and had commented on them favourably in his newspaper correspondence.

"When speaking with fierce indignation of the policy of the Liberal Party, especially in regard to Ireland, the old warrior's small deep-sunk eyes lighted up, his heavy brows wrinkled, the broad, strong nose and face were obviously moved by passion, and he poured out a stream of vigorous denunciation, which displayed alike the heat of his temperament and the marvellous command he possessed over our language. The contrast between his manner and utterance when thus deeply stirred by anger and his attitude when giving his views on the economic events of the period was very marked. He turned from the role of prophet and vehement denunciator to that of the calm philosopher without any apparent effort, and I felt from the first that on this latter ground many a long year might pass before I ceased to be a student in the presence of a master.

"I had been surprised in reading *Capital*, and still more when perusing his smaller works, such as his pronouncement on the Commune of Paris, and his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, how he combined the ablest and coolest examination of economic causes and social effects with the most bitter hatred of classes and even of individual men such as

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* Until he recently turned to jingoism, Hyndman was a determined enemy of British imperialism, and from 1878 carried on a noble campaign of exposure against the shameful acts of violence, outrage, plunder, and indignity (including the flogging of political "criminals") for which Britishers of all parties in India, including the "educated" and "radical" author, John Morley, have long made themselves famous.

Napoleon III or M. Thiers, who, according to his own theories, were little more than flies upon the wheels of the great Juggernaut car of capitalist development. Marx, of course, was a Jew, and to me it seemed that he combined in his own person and nature, with his commanding forehead and great overhanging brow, his fierce glittering eyes, broad sensitive nose and mobile mouth, all surrounded by a setting of untrimmed hair and beard, the righteous fury of the great seers of his race, with the cold analytical powers of Spinoza and the Jewish doctors. It was an extraordinary combination of qualities, the like of which I have known in no other man.

"As I went out with Hirsch, deeply impressed by the great personality we had left, Hirsch asked me what I thought of Marx. 'Well,' I replied, 'I think he is the Aristotle of the nineteenth century.' And yet as I said it, I knew that this did not cover the ground. For one thing it was quite impossible to think of Marx as acting the courtier to Alexander [of Macedonia] while carrying on the profound studies which have so deeply influenced later generations, and besides he never so wholly segregated himself from immediate human interests—notwithstanding much that has been said to the contrary—as to be able to consider facts and their surroundings in the cold hard light of the greatest philosopher of antiquity. There can be no doubt whatever that his hatred of the system of exploitation and wage slavery by which he was surrounded was not only intellectual and philosophic but bitterly personal.

"I remember saying to him once that as I grew older, I thought I became more tolerant. 'Do you,' he said, '*do* you?' It was quite certain he didn't. It has been, I think, Marx's deep animosity to the existing order of things and his scathing criticism of his opponents which has prevented many of the educated well-to-do class from appreciating his masterly life-work at its full value and has rendered third-rate sciolists and logomachers like Böhm-Bawerk, such heroes in their eyes, merely because they have misrepresented and attempted to 'refute' him. Accustomed as we are nowadays, especially in England, to fence always with big soft buttons on the point of our rapiers, Marx's terrible onslaughts with naked steel upon his adversaries appeared so improper that it was impossible for our gentlemanly sham fighters and mental gymnasium men to believe that this unsparing controversialist and furious assailant of capital and capitalists was really the deepest thinker of modern times."

In 1880 Marx was practically unknown to the British public. His health was then failing. His strenuous exertions (sixteen hours a day and more of mental labour!) had sapped his constitution. He was now forbidden by his doctors to do any work in the evenings and, Hyndman relates, "at the close of 1880 and the beginning of 1881, I had the advantage of very frequent conversations with the Doctor".

"Our method of talking was peculiar. Marx had a habit when at all interested in the discussion of walking actively up and down the room as if he were pacing the deck of a schooner for exercise. I had acquired on my long voyages (to America, Australia, etc.) the same

> tendency of pacing to and fro when my mind was much occupied. Consequently, master and student could have been seen walking up and down on opposite sides of the table for two or three hours in succession, engaged in discussing the affairs of the past and the present."

Hyndman does not give anything like a detailed account of the position Marx took *on even a single one of the questions* he discussed with him. From what is quoted above it can be seen that Hyndman concentrated mostly, almost exclusively, indeed, on the *anecdotal* side; this is in line with the rest of his book. Hyndman's autobiography is the life story of a British bourgeois philistine who, being the pick of his class, finally makes his way to socialism, but never completely throws off bourgeois traditions, bourgeois views and prejudices.

While repeating the philistine reproaches against Marx and Engels that they were "autocrats" in "what was supposed to be a democratic" International, that they did not understand practical affairs, did not know people, etc., Hyndman never makes an attempt to test a single one of these reproaches on the basis of an exact, concrete analysis of the circumstances at the periods concerned.

The result is anecdote and not Marxist historical analysis. Marx and Engels fought against the unification of German Social-Democracy (with the Lassalleans), whereas this unity was necessary! That is all that Hyndman says. He does not say a word about Marx and Engels having been a thousand times right in principle in their opposition to Lassalle and the Lassalleans. He does not even raise the question. He does not even ask himself whether "democracy" (organisational) in the period of the International was not a screen for bourgeois sects engaged in disrupting the work of building up proletarian Social-Democracy.

As a result, the story of Hyndman's rupture with Marx is told in such a way that we get absolutely nothing but gossip (in the spirit of the Dioneos). Engels, you see, was "exacting, suspicious, jealous"; Marx's wife is alleged to have told Hyndman's wife that Engels was Marx's "evil genius" (!); Engels, whom Hyndman never even met (despite what Mr. Dioneo has written in *Russkiye Vedomosti*), was "not disinclined to give full weight to the exchange value of his ready cash in his relations with those whom he helped" (with money; Engels was very rich, Marx very poor). Engels is said to have caused a quarrel between Marx and Hyndman, out of fear that Hyndman, a wealthy man at that time, would take Engels's place as Marx's rich friend!

Of course, the liberals derive pleasure from rehashing such inexpressible vulgarities. And of course it is not at all in the interests of the liberal hacks at least to acquaint themselves with the letters (of Marx and Engels) to Sorge, referred to by Hyndman himself, and *to try and understand* the point at issue. They do not take the trouble to do that! And yet a reference to these letters and a comparison between them and Hyndman's "memoirs" would immediately settle the matter.

In 1881 Hyndman published a pamphlet entitled *England for All* in which he adopts socialism but remains a very, very confused bourgeois democrat. The pamphlet was written for the Democratic Federation (not socialist) which had then been founded and to which a large number of anti-socialist elements belonged. Hyndman paraphrases and copies from *Capital* in two chapters of this pamphlet, *but does not mention Marx*; however, in the preface he speaks vaguely of a certain "great thinker" and "original writer" to whom he is greatly indebted, etc. Hyndman tells us that it was over this that Engels caused a "breach" between him and Marx, and at the same time quotes a letter Marx had written to him (dated December 8, 1880), in which Marx says that, according to Hyndman, he, Hyndman, "does not share the views of my [Marx's] party for England".

It is clear what the difference was—a difference not understood, noticed, or appreciated by Hyndman. It was that Hyndman at that time (as Marx plainly wrote to Sorge on December 15, 1881) was a "well-meaning, petty-bourgeois writer", "half-bourgeois, half-proletarian". Obviously if a man who makes the acquaintance of Marx, becomes intimate with him, calls himself a student of his, later forms a "democratic" federation and writes a pamphlet for it in which he misrepresents Marxism and does not mention Marx, the latter could not let it pass without making a "furious" protest. Evidently the protest was made, for Marx in the same letter to Sorge quotes extracts from letters of apology in which Hyndman excuses himself on the ground that "the English don't like to be taught by foreigners" and that "my [Marx's] name was so much detested" (!), etc. (Hyndman himself states that he destroyed nearly all of Marx's letters to him, so that the discovery of the truth from this side is not to be expected.)

Fine apologies, are they not! Well, at a time when the question of the then existing differences between Hyndman and Marx has been cleared up quite definitely, and when even the whole of Hyndman's present book shows that there is much of the philistine and bourgeois in his views (for example, the arguments with which Hyndman defends capital punishment for criminals!), what is offered as the explanation of this rupture with Marx is the "intrigues" of Engels, who for forty years followed a common line of principle with Marx. Even if all the rest of Hyndman's book were a barrel of honey, this one spoonful of tar would be enough to spoil it!

The differences between Marx and Hyndman at that time are most characteristically revealed by what Hyndman tells us about Marx's opinion of Henry George. Marx's appraisal of Henry George is known from his letter to Sorge dated June 20, 1881. Talking with Marx, Hyndman defended Henry George using the following argument: "George will teach more by inculcating error than other men can impart by complete exposition of the truth."

"Marx," writes Hyndman, "would not hear of this as a sound contention. The promulgation of error could never be of any good to the people, that was his view. 'To leave error unrefuted is to encourage intellectual immorality. For ten who go farther, a hundred may very easily stop with George, and the danger of this is too great to run!'" That was what Marx said!

Yet Hyndman tells us that, on the one hand, he still holds to his previous opinion of Henry George, and that, on the other hand, George was a boy with a bright farthing dip fooling around within the radius of a man using an electric searchlight.

An excellent comparison, only ... only it was risky for Hyndman to make this excellent comparison side by side with his miserable gossip about Engels.

Zvezda No. 31, November 26, 1911

Collected Works, Vol. 17, pp. 306-12

From A COMPARISON OF THE STOLYPIN AND THE NARODNIK AGRARIAN PROGRAMMES

The renting of land is *even more convenient* for pure capitalism, for the fullest, freest, and most "ideal" adaptation to the market, than is ownership of land. Why? Because private ownership of land *hampers* its transfer from hand to hand, *hinders* the adaptation of land tenure to the conditions of the market, *perpetuates* ownership of the land by a particular family or person and his heirs, even if they are bad farmers. Renting is a more flexible form, under which the adaptation of land tenure to the market takes place most simply, most easily and most rapidly.

That, incidentally, is why Britain is not an exception among the capitalist countries, but is the country that, from the point of view of capitalism, has the most perfect agrarian system, as Marx pointed out in his criticism of Rodbertus. And what is Britain's agrarian system? It is the old system of landownership, landlordism, with the new, free, purely capitalist renting of land.

And what if that landlordism were to exist without landlords, i.e., if the land were owned, not by landlords, but by the state? That, from the point of view of capitalism, would be a *still more* perfect agrarian system, with still greater freedom of adaptation of land tenure to the market, with still greater ease in the mobilisation of the land as an object of economy, with still greater freedom, breadth, clarity and definiteness in the class struggle characteristic of every form of capitalist landownership.

Nevskaya Zvezda No. 15, July 1, 1912

Collected Works, Vol. 18, pp. 145-46

IN BRITAIN

The British Liberals have been in power for six and a half years. The working-class movement in Britain is becoming stronger and stronger. Strikes are assuming a mass character; moreover, they are ceasing to be purely economic and are developing into political strikes.

Robert Smillie, the leader of the Scottish miners who recently showed such strength in mass struggle, declares that in their next big fight the miners will demand the transfer of the collieries to state ownership. And this next big fight is approaching inexorably, because all the miners of Britain are perfectly well aware that the notorious Minimum Wage Act cannot bring about any appreciable improvement in their conditions.

And so the British Liberals, who are losing ground, have invented a new battle-cry in order once again to induce the mass of the electors to trust the Liberals for a while. "You can't sell without cheating" is the commercial slogan of capitalism. "You can't get seats in parliament without cheating" is the slogan of capitalist politics in free countries.

The "fashionable" slogan invented by the Liberals for this purpose is the demand for "land reform". It is not clear what the Liberals and their expert in humbugging the masses, Lloyd George, mean by that. Apparently, it is a question of increasing the land tax, and no more. But the idea that actually lies behind the resounding talk about "restoring the land to the people", etc., is to collect further millions for military adventures, for the Navy.

In Britain, agriculture is conducted wholly on capitalist lines. The capitalist farmers rent medium-sized plots of land from the landlords and cultivate them with the aid of wage-workers.

Under these circumstances, no "land reform" can in any way change the conditions of the agricultural workers. In Britain the buying-out of landed estates might even become a new method of fleecing the proletariat, since the landlords and the capitalists, who would retain state power, would sell their land at exorbitant prices. And the price would have to be paid by the taxpayers, i.e., the workers again.

The fuss made by the Liberals about the land question has done good in one respect: it has roused interest in organising the agricultural workers.

When Britain's agricultural workers wake up and join together in unions, the Liberals will no longer be able to get away with charlatan "promises of reform" or of allotments for farm-hands and day-labourers.

Recently a reporter of a British labour newspaper visited Joseph Arch, the veteran agricultural workers' leader who has done much to rouse the labourers to a class-conscious life. This could not be done at one stroke, and Arch's slogan—"three acres and a cow" for every agricultural worker—was a very naïve one. The union he founded fell to pieces, but the cause he fought for is not dead and the organisation of the agricultural workers in Britain is once again becoming an immediate issue.

Arch is now 83 years old. He lives in the same village and in the same house in which he was born. He told his interviewer that the agricultural workers' union had managed to raise wages to 15, 16 and 17 shillings a week. And now the wages of agricultural workers in Britain have again dropped—in Norfolk, where Arch lives—to 12 or 13 shillings a week.

Pravda No. 89,
August 12, 1912

Collected Works, Vol. 18,
pp. 270-71

DEBATES IN BRITAIN ON LIBERAL-LABOUR POLICY

It is well known that in Britain there are two workers' parties: the British Socialist Party,[62] as the Social-Democrats now call themselves, and the so-called Independent Labour Party.

This split in the British workers' socialist movement is no accident. It originated long ago. It arose out of the specific features of British history. Capitalism developed in Britain before it did in any other country, and for a long time Britain was the "workshop" of the world. This exceptional, monopoly position created relatively tolerable conditions of life for the *labour aristocracy*, i.e., for the minority of skilled, well-paid workers in Britain.

Hence the petty-bourgeois, craft spirit in the ranks of this labour aristocracy, which has been divorcing itself from its class, following in the wake of the Liberals, and treating socialism contemptuously as a "utopia". The Independent Labour Party is a party of liberal labour policy. It is justly said that this Party is "independent" only of socialism, but very dependent on liberalism.

In recent times Britain's monopoly has been thoroughly undermined. The previous relatively tolerable conditions of life have given way to extreme want as a consequence of the high cost of living. The class struggle is becoming immensely intensified, and along with this the basis for opportunism, the former basis for the spread of the ideas of liberal-labour policy among the working class, is being undermined.

So long as these ideas persisted among considerable numbers of British workers, elimination of the split among the workers was out of the question. Unity cannot be *created* by phrases and desires, so long as the Social-Democrats have to fight against liberal-labour policy. *At the present time*, however, this unity is really becoming possible, because the *protest* against liberal-labour policy is *growing* in the Independent Labour Party *itself*.

Before us lies the official report of the latest, Twentieth, Annual Conference of that Party, held at Merthyr on May 27 and 28, 1912. The debate on parliamentary policy given in the report is extremely interesting; essentially it was a debate on a deeper issue, that of Social-Democratic and liberal-labour policies, although the speakers did not use these terms.

The Conference debate was opened by Jowett, M. P. He moved a resolution against supporting the Liberals, of which we shall speak in greater detail below, and a fellow-thinker, Conway, who seconded the motion, said plainly: "The average worker is asking the question whether the Labour Party in Parliament has a view of its own." Suspicion is growing among the workers that the Labour Party is "tied" to the Liberals. "A feeling is growing in the country that the Labour Party is simply a wing of the Liberal Party." It should be observed that the Parliamentary Labour Party consists *not only* of I.L.P. M.P.s, but also of M.P.s sponsored by trade unions. These call themselves Labour M.P.s. and Labour Party members, and *do not belong* to the I.L.P. The British opportunists have succeeded in doing what the opportunists in other countries are frequently inclined to do, namely, in combining opportunist "socialist" M.P.s with the M.P.s of allegedly non-party trade unions. The notorious "broad labour party", of which certain Mensheviks spoke in Russia in 1906-07, has materialised in Britain, and only in Britain.

To give practical expression to his views, Jowett moved a resolution, drawn up in the truly "British" manner, that is, without any general principles (the British pride themselves on their "practicality" and their dislike for general principles; this is just another expression of the craft spirit in the labour movement). The resolution called on the Labour group in the House of Commons to *ignore all threats* that the Liberal government might find itself in a minority and so be compelled to resign, and *to vote steadfastly on the merits of the questions brought before them*.

Jowett's motion "took the bull by the horns". The Liberal Cabinet in Britain, like the entire Liberal Party, is doing its utmost to persuade the workers that all forces must be united against reaction (i.e., against the Conservative Party), that the Liberal majority must be preserved, for it may melt away if the workers do not vote with the Liberals, and that the workers must not isolate themselves but must support the Liberals. And so Jowett puts the question clearly: vote "steadfastly", ignore the threat that the Liberal government may fall, do not vote as the interests of the Liberal Party require it, but on the merits of the questions, i.e., in Marxist language—pursue an independent proletarian class policy and not a liberal-labour policy.

(In the ranks of the Independent Labour Party, Marxism is rejected *on principle*, and that is why Marxist language is not used at all.)

The opportunists, who predominate in the Party, immediately attacked Jowett. And—characteristically—they did it exactly as opportunists, in a roundabout way, by an evasion. They did not want to say *plainly* that they were *in favour* of supporting the Liberals. They expressed their idea in *general phrases*, and, of course, did not fail to mention the "independence" of the working class. Just like our liquidators,[63] who always shout especially loudly about the "independence" of the working class whenever they are *in fact* preparing to replace its independence by a liberal-labour policy.

Murray, the representative of the opportunist majority, moved an amendment, i.e., counter-resolution, as follows:

> "That this Conference recognises that the Labour Party, in order to effectually carry out its object, must continue to regard all the possible consequences and effects, immediate and otherwise, of any line of action before adopting it, bearing in mind that its decisions must be guided solely by consideration for its own interest as a party, and by desire to increase its opportunities for attaining its ends."

Compare the two motions. Jowett's motion clearly demanded a break with the policy of supporting the Liberals. Murray's consisted of meaningless commonplaces, quite plausible and at first sight indisputable, but *in fact* serving to disguise *precisely* the policy of supporting the Liberals. Had Murray been acquainted with Marx, and had he been speaking to people who respected Marxism, he would have thought nothing of sweetening his opportunism with Marxist turns of speech and saying that Marxism demands that all the concrete circumstances of each particular case should be taken into consideration, that we must not tie our hands, that while preserving our independence we "take advantage of conflicts", "seize at the Achilles heel of the contradictions" in the present regime, and so on and so forth.

Opportunism can be expressed in terms of *any* doctrine *you like, including Marxism*. The peculiarity of the "destiny of Marxism" in Russia lies precisely in the fact that not only opportunism in the workers' party, but also opportunism in the liberal party (Izgoyev and Co.), likes to dress itself in Marxist "*terms*"! But that is by the way. Let us return to Merthyr.

Jowett was supported by McLachlan.

> "What are the interests of a political party?" he asked. "Are the interests of the party merely to be served by retaining men in the House of Commons? If the interests of the party are to be considered, then the men and women who are outside Parliament have as much right to be considered as the men in Parliament. As a socialist organisation we should try to give effect to our principles in our political activities."

And McLachlan referred to the vote on the Heswell Reformatory case. A boy inmate of the reformatory had been tortured to death. A question was asked in Parliament. The Liberal Cabinet was threatened with defeat: Britain is not Prussia, and a Cabinet that is in the minority must resign. And so, to save the Cabinet, the Labour M.P.s. voted in favour of whitewashing the torturer.

The Labour Party, said McLachlan, keeps on taking into account the effect which their vote might have on the fate of the government, thinking that should the Cabinet fall, Parliament would be dissolved and a new general election announced. But that was nothing to be afraid of. The fall of the Cabinet and the announcement of new elections would result in a *combination of the two bourgeois parties* (Mc-Lachlan simply said: the "other two parties", without the word "bourgeois". The British do not like Marxist terms!), *and the sooner that happened, the better for our movement*. The words of our propagandists should be carried into effect by the work of our men in the House. Until that was done, the Tory (i.e., Conservative) workman *would never believe there was any difference between the Liberal and Labour Parties*. Even if we lost every seat in the House through upholding our principles, it would do more good than attempts to coax a Liberal government into making concessions!

Keir Hardie, M.P., the Party leader, twists and turns.

"It is not true to say that the Labour Party upholds the balance of power. The Liberals and Irishmen in the House can outvote the Tory and Labour members.... In the case of the Heswell Reformatory I voted for the government purely on the merits of the case, and not in support of the government. The superintendent had been guilty of harshness and cruelty, and every Labour member went to the House determined to vote against the government. But during the debate the other side was put, and it showed that although the superintendent had been guilty of cruel treatment, the record of the School was the best in the Kingdom. Under those circumstances it would have been wrong to vote against the government.... [Such is the pass to which the British opportunists have brought the Labour Party: the leader was not howled down for that sort of speech, but was listened to calmly!]

"The real trouble is not with the I.L.P. members, but that when the Labour Party took over the Miners' Federation, and the miners' members joined the Labour group, *they were Liberals*, and they have not changed their opinions, since they gave a *purely nominal* adherence to the Party....

"Jowett's resolution reduces Parliamentary government to absurdity. The consequences of any vote must be considered....

"I would advise the previous question as regards both the resolution and the amendment." (!!!)

Lansbury, supporting Jowett's resolution, said:

"It is not so foolish as Keir Hardie would have us suppose. It does not mean that in voting upon a question every consideration should be ignored but *only* the consideration as to what effect it would have on the government. I got into the socialist movement through sheer disgust with political caucuses and bosses, and the control of the House of Commons by such people. My experience has been that every question that comes up for discussion has to be discussed in regard to its probable effect on the fortunes of the government of the day.

"It makes it almost impossible for the Labour Party to differentiate itself from the Liberal Party. I do not know of any particular piece of legislation in connection with which the Labour Party has in any kind of way differentiated itself from the Liberals. We as a party were part and parcel of the government in regard to the Insurance Act.... The Labour Party voted steadily for the Bill, and stood by the government all the way through.

"I was ashamed of the vote over the Heswell Reformatory. When a man poured boiling water over a boy until he died I felt ashamed of ... voting for the whitewashing of that man. On that occasion the Labour Party whips ran about the House bringing up their men to prevent the government being defeated.... To accustom men ... to voting against their consciences is deadly for the future of democracy in this country...."

Philip Snowden, M.P., one of the most rabid opportunists, wriggled like an eel. He said:

"My fighting instinct inclines me to support the resolution, but my common sense, judgement, and experience induce me to vote for the amendment. I agree that the present Parliamentary system has a demoralising effect upon those who went to the House moved by idealism and political enthusiasm. But I do not believe the adoption of Jowett's resolution will make much difference. The merits of a question are not confined to the particular question itself. There are certain issues which the Labour Party considers of greater importance than any possible consequences of voting for the government—Women's Suffrage is one—but are we to disregard consequences on every paltry issue? This policy would necessitate repeated General Elections and nothing is more irritating to the public than such contests... . Politics means compromise."

When a vote was taken, 73 voted for the resolution and 195 *against*.

The opportunists carried the day. That is not surprising in an opportunist party like the British I.L.P. But it is now a fully established fact that opportunism is giving rise to an opposition in the ranks of this very Party.

The opponents of opportunism acted far more correctly than their like-minded colleagues in Germany frequently do when they defend rotten compromises with the opportunists. The fact that they came out openly with their resolution gave rise to an extremely important debate on principles, and this debate will have a very strong effect on the British working class. Liberal-labour policy persists owing to tradition, routine and the agility of opportunist leaders. But its bankruptcy among the mass of the proletariat is inevitable.

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Collected Works, Vol. 18,
pp. 360-65

IN AMERICA

The 32nd Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour, as the association of trade unions is called, has come to a close in Rochester. Alongside the rapidly growing Socialist Party, this association is a living relic of the past: of the old craft-union, liberal-bourgeois traditions that hang full weight over America's working-class *aristocracy*.

On August 31, 1911, the Federation had 1,841,268 members. Samuel Gompers, a strong opponent of socialism, was re-elected President. But Max Hayes, the socialist workers' candidate, received 5,074 votes against Gompers's 11,974, whereas previously Gompers used to be elected unanimously. The struggle of the socialists against the "trade unionists" in the American trade union movement is slowly but surely leading to the victory of the former over the latter.

Gompers not only fully accepts the bourgeois myth of "harmony between labour and capital", but carries on a downright bourgeois policy in the Federation against the socialist one, although he professes to stand for the complete political "neutrality" of the trade unions! During the recent presidential elections in America, Gompers reprinted in the Federation's official publication the programmes and platforms of all three bourgeois parties (Democrats, Republicans and Progressists) but did *not* reprint the programme of the *Socialist* Party!

Protests against this mode of action were voiced at the Rochester Convention even by Gompers's own followers.

The state of affairs in the American labour movement shows us, as it doe in Britain, the remarkably clear-cut division between purely trade unionist and socialist strivings, the split between *bourgeois labour policy* and socialist labour policy. For, strange as it may seem, in capitalist society even the working class can carry on a bourgeois policy, if it forgets about its emancipatory aims, puts up with wage-slavery and confines itself to seeking alliances now with one bourgeois party, now with another, for the sake of imaginary "improvements" in its indentured condition.

The principal historical cause of the particular prominence and (temporary) strength of bourgeois labour policy in Britain and America is the long-standing political liberty and the exceptionally favourable conditions, in comparison with other countries, for the deep-going and widespread development of capitalism. These conditions have tended to produce within the working class an aristocracy that has trailed behind the bourgeoisie, *betraying* its own class.

In the twentieth century, this peculiar situation in Britain and America is rapidly disappearing. Other countries are catching up with Anglo-Saxon capitalism, and the *mass* of workers are learning about socialism at first hand. The faster the growth of world capitalism, the sooner will socialism triumph in America and Britain.

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THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT IN 1912

The miners' strike was the outstanding event of the past year. While the railway strike in 1911 showed the "new spirit" of the British workers, the miners' strike definitely marked an epoch.

Despite the "war" preparations of the ruling classes, and despite the strenuous efforts of the bourgeoisie to crush the resistance of the rebellious slaves of capital, the strike was a success. The miners displayed exemplary organisation. There was not a trace of blacklegging. Coal-mining by soldiers or inexperienced labourers was out of the question. And after six weeks of struggle the bourgeois government of Britain saw that the country's entire industrial activity was coming to a standstill and that the words of the workers' song, "All wheels cease to whir when thy hand wills it",[64] were coming true.

The government made concessions.

"The Prime Minister of the most powerful empire the world has ever seen attended a delegate meeting of the mineowners' striking slaves and pleaded with them to agree to a compromise." That is how a well-informed Marxist summed up the struggle.

The British Government, which year after year usually feeds its workers with promises of reform "some day", this time acted with real dispatch. In *five days* a new law was rushed through Parliament! This law introduced a *minimum* wage, i.e., regulations establishing rates of pay *below* which wages cannot be reduced.

It is true that this law, like all bourgeois reforms, is a miserable half-measure and in part a mere deception of the workers, because while fixing the lowest rate of pay, the employers keep their wage-slaves down all the same. Nevertheless, those who are familiar with the British labour movement say that since the miners' strike the British proletariat *is no longer the same*. The workers have learned to fight. They have come to see the *path* that will lead them to victory. They have become aware of their strength. They have ceased to be the meek lambs they seemed to be for so long a time to the joy of all the defenders and extollers of wage-slavery.

In Britain a change has taken place in the balance of social forces, a change that cannot be expressed in figures but is felt by all.

Unfortunately, there is not much progress in Party affairs in Britain. The split between the British Socialist Party (formerly the Social-Democratic Federation) and the Independent (of socialism) Labour Party persists. The opportunist conduct of the M.P.s belonging to the latter party is giving rise, as always happens, to *syndicalist* tendencies among the workers. Fortunately, these tendencies are not strong.

The British trade unions are slowly but surely turning towards socialism, in spite of the many Labour M.P.s who stubbornly champion the old line of liberal labour policy. But it is beyond the power of these last of the Mohicans to retain the old line!

Pravda No. 1,
January 1, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 18,
pp. 467-68

THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

The Thirteenth Conference of the British Labour Party was held in London from January 29 to 31 (new style). It was attended by 500 delegates.

The Conference passed a resolution against war, and by a considerable majority passed another resolution calling on the Party's representatives in Parliament to vote against any electoral reform Bill that does not extend the franchise to women.

The British Labour Party, which exists *side by side* with the opportunist Independent Labour Party and the Social-Democratic British Socialist Party, is something in the nature of a *broad labour party.* It is a compromise between a socialist party and non-socialist trade unions.

This compromise resulted from the peculiarities of British history and the segregation of the labour *aristocracy* in non-socialist, liberal trade unions. These unions have begun to turn towards socialism, and this gives rise to a host of intermediate, confused situations.

On Party discipline, for example, a resolution was adopted threatening expulsion from the Party for violation of the decisions of the Party or ofthe *Parliamentary group.*

Disputes arose that would be impossible in any other country—as to whether this resolution is directed against the Liberals or against the Socialists?

The fact is that out of forty Labour M.P.s, 27 are *non-Socialists*!! In opposing the resolution, the Socialist Will Thorne said they wanted to *tie the hands* of the thirteen Socialists by subordinating them to the *non-Socialists.*

Even Bruce Glasier, of the I.L.P., while supporting the resolution, admitted that there are about *half a dozen* Labour M.P.s whose place is among the Conservatives.

The resolution was carried.

A resolution that not only the posters of the opportunist *Daily Herald*[65] be displayed in Party premises was defeated by 643,000 votes to 398,000. The voting here is calculated according to the number of members which each delegation represents.

The majority at the Conference consisted of non-Socialists and extremely bad Socialists. But definite voices were heard indicating that the mass of the workers are dissatisfied with such a party and they demand that their M.P.s should do less playing at legislation and more socialist propaganda.

Pravda No. 30, February 6, 1913	*Collected Works*, Vol. 18, pp. 547-48

"WHO STANDS TO GAIN?"

There is a Latin tag *cui prodest*? meaning "who stands to gain?" When it is not immediately apparent which political or social groups, forces or alignments advocate certain proposals, measures, etc., one should always ask: "Who stands to gain?"

It is not important *who* directly advocates a particular policy, since under the present noble system of capitalism any money-bag can always "hire", buy or enlist any number of lawyers, writers and even parliamentary deputies, professors, parsons and the like to defend any views. We live in an age of commerce, when the bourgeoisie have no scruples about trading in honour or conscience. There are also simpletons who out of stupidity or by force of habit defend views prevalent in certain bourgeois circles.

Yes, indeed! In politics it is not so important *who* directly advocates particular views. What is important is *who stands to gain* from these views, proposals, measures.

For instance, "Europe", the states that call themselves "civilised", are now engaged in a mad armaments hurdle-race. In thousands of ways, in thousands of newspapers, from thousands of pulpits, they shout and clamour about patriotism, culture, native land, peace, and progress—and all in order to justify new expenditures of tens and hundreds of millions of rubles for all manner of weapons of destruction—for guns, dreadnoughts, etc.

"Ladies and gentlemen", one feels like saying about all these phrases mouthed by patriots, so-called. "Put no faith in phrase-mongering, it is better to see *who stands to gain*!"

A short while ago the renowned British firm Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. published its annual balance-sheet. The firm is engaged mainly in the manufacture of armaments of various kinds. A profit was shown of £ 877,000, *about 8 million rubles*, and a dividend of *12.5 per cent* was declared! About 900,000 rubles were set aside as reserve capital, and so on and so forth.

That's where the millions and milliards squeezed out of the workers and peasants for armaments go. Dividends of 12.5 per cent mean that capital is *doubled* in 8 years. And this is in addition to all kinds of fees to directors, etc. Armstrong in Britain, Krupp in Germany, Creusot in France, Cockerill in Belgium—how many of them are there in all the "civilised" countries? And the countless host of contractors?

These are the ones *who stand to gain* from the whipping up of chauvinism, from the chatter about "patriotism" (cannon patriotism), about the defence of culture (with weapons destructive of culture) and so forth!

Pravda No. 84,
April 11, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 53-54

IN BRITAIN

(The Sad Results of Opportunism)

The British Labour Party, which must be distinguished from the *two* socialist parties in Britain, the British Socialist Party and the Independent Labour Party, is the workers' organisation that is most opportunist and soaked in the spirit of liberal-labour policy.

In Britain there is full political liberty and the socialist parties exist quite openly. But the Labour Party is the parliamentary representative of workers' organisations, of which some are non-political, and others liberal, a regular mixture of the kind our liquidators want, those who hurl so much abuse at the "underground".

The opportunism of the British Labour Party is to be explained by the specific historical conditions of the latter half of the nineteenth century in Britain, when the "aristocracy of labour" shared to some extent in the particularly high profits of British capital. Now these conditions are becoming a thing of the past. Even the Independent Labour Party, i.e., the *socialist* opportunists in Britain, realises that the Labour Party has landed in a morass.

In the last issue of *The Labour Leader*, the organ of the Independent Labour Party, we find the following edifying communication. Naval estimates are being discussed in the British Parliament. The socialists introduce a motion to *reduce* them. The bourgeoisie, of course, quash it by voting *for* the government.

And the Labour M.P.s?

Fifteen vote for the reduction, i.e., against the government; 21 *are absent*; 4 vote *for the government*, i.e., against the reduction!

Two of the four try to justify their action on the grounds that the workers in their constituencies earn their living in the armament industries.

There you have a striking example of how opportunism leads to the *betrayal* of socialism, the *betrayal* of the workers' cause. As we have already indicated, condemnation of this treachery is spreading ever wider among British socialists. From the example of other people's mistakes, the Russian workers, too, should learn to understand how fatal are opportunism and liberal-labour policy.

Pravda No. 85,
April 12, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 55-56

CIVILISED EUROPEANS AND SAVAGE ASIANS

The well-known English Social-Democrat, Rothstein, relates in the German labour press an instructive and typical incident that occurred in British India. This incident reveals better than all arguments why the revolution is growing apace in that country with its more than 300 million inhabitants.

Arnold, a British journalist, who brings out a newspaper in Rangoon, a large town (with over 200,000 inhabitants) in one of the Indian provinces, published an article entitled: "A Mockery of British Justice". It exposed a local British judge named Andrew. For publishing this article Arnold was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, but he appealed and, having connections in London, was able to get the case before the highest court in Britain. The Government of India hastily "reduced" the sentence to four months and Arnold was released.

What was all the fuss about?

A British colonel named McCormick had a mistress whose servant was a little eleven-year-old Indian girl, named Aina. This gallant representative of a civilised nation had enticed Aina to his room, raped her and locked her up in his house.

It so happened that Aina's father was dying and he sent for his daughter. It was then that the village where he lived learned the whole story. The population seethed with indignation. The police were compelled to order McCormick's arrest.

But Judge Andrew released him on bail, and later acquitted him, following a disgraceful travesty of justice. The gallant colonel declared, as gentlemen of noble extraction usually do under such circumstances, that Aina was a prostitute, in proof of which he brought five witnesses. Eight witnesses, however, brought by Aina's mother were not even examined by Judge Andrew.

When the journalist Arnold was tried for libel, the President of the Court, Sir ("His Worship") Charles Fox, refused to allow him to call witnesses in his defence.

It must be clear to everyone that thousands and millions of such cases occur in India. Only absolutely exceptional circumstances enabled the "libeller" Arnold (the son of an influential London journalist) to get out of prison and secure publicity for the case.

Do not forget that the British Liberals put their "best" people at the head of the Indian administration. Not long ago the Viceroy of India, the chief of the McCormicks, Andrews and Foxes, was John Morley, the well-known radical author, a "luminary of European learning", a "most honourable man" in the eyes of all European and Russian liberals.

The "European" spirit has already awakened in Asia, the peoples of Asia have become democratic-minded.

Pravda No. 87,
April 14, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 57-58

A GREAT TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT

The world-famous British chemist, William Ramsay, has discovered a method of obtaining gas directly from a coal seam. Ramsay is already negotiating with a colliery owner on the practical application of this method.

A great modern technical problem is thus approaching solution. The revolution that will be effected by this solution will be a tremendous one.

At the present time, to utilise the energy contained in it, coal is transported all over the country and burned in numerous factories and homes.

Ramsay's discovery means a gigantic technical revolution in this, perhaps the most important, branch of production in capitalist countries.

Ramsay has discovered a method of transforming coal into gas right where the coal lies, without hauling it to the surface. A similar but much simpler method is sometimes used in the mining of salt: it is not brought to the surface directly, but is dissolved in water, the solution being pumped to the top.

Ramsay's method is to transform, as it were, the coal mines into enormous distilling apparatuses for the production of gas. Gas is used to drive gas engines which can extract *twice as much* energy from coal as steam-engines can. Gas engines, in their turn, transform the energy into electricity, which modern technology can already transmit over enormous distances.

Such a technical revolution would reduce the cost of electricity to *one-fifth* or even *one-tenth* of its present price. An enormous amount of human labour now spent in extracting and distributing coal would be saved. It would be possible to use even the poorest seams, now not being worked. The cost of lighting and heating houses would be greatly reduced.

This discovery will bring about an enormous revolution in industry.

But the consequences this revolution will have for social life as a whole under the present capitalist system will be quite different from those the discovery would yield under socialism.

Under capitalism the "release" of the labour of millions of miners engaged in extracting coal will inevitably cause mass unemployment, an enormous increase in poverty, and a worsening of the workers' conditions. And the profits of this great invention will be pocketed by the Morgans, Rockefellers, Ryabushinskys, Morozovs, and their suites of lawyers, directors, professors, and other flunkeys of capital.

Under socialism the application of Ramsay's method, which will "release" the labour of millions of miners, etc., will make it possible immediately to shorten the working day *for all* from 8 hours to, say, 7 hours and even less. The "electrification" of all factories and railways will make working conditions more hygienic, will free millions of workers from smoke, dust and dirt, and accelerate the transformation of dirty, repulsive workshops into clean, bright laboratories worthy of human beings. The electric lighting and heating of every home will relieve millions of "domestic slaves" of the need to spend three-fourths of their lives in smelly kitchens.

Capitalist technology is increasingly, day by day, *outgrowing* the social conditions which condemn the working people to wage-slavery.

Pravda No. 91,
April 21, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 61-62

BRITISH SOCIALIST PARTY CONFERENCE

The British Socialist Party was founded in Manchester in 1911. It included the former Socialist Party, which had earlier been known as the Social Democratic Federation, and several isolated groups and individuals, among them Victor Grayson, a very fiery socialist but one not strong in principles and given to phrase-mongering.

The Second Conference of the British Socialist Party was held in the seaside town of Blackpool from May 10 to May 12 (N. S.). Only 100 delegates were present, less than one-third of the full number, and this circumstance, coupled with the bitter struggle of the majority of the delegates against the old party executive, produced a very bad impression on outside observers. The British bourgeois press (exactly like that of Russia) does its best to pick out, colour up and make a splash of episodes from any particularly acute struggle between the party and its executive.

The bourgeois press is not concerned with the *ideological* content of the struggle inside the socialist movement. All it needs is sensation, and a spicy bit of scandal....

The ideological content of the struggle in the B.S.P., however, was very serious. The old executive was headed by Hyndman, one of the founders of the party. He has been acting for a number of years without any attention to the party, and even against the party, on the important question of armaments and war. Hyndman has got it into his head that Germany is threatening to crush and enslave Britain and that socialists should, therefore, support the demand for a "proper" (i.e., strong) navy for the defence of Britain!

Socialists in the role of supporters of a "strong" navy—and this in a country whose navy helps enslave and plunder in the most shameless, feudal manner the *three hundred millions* of India's population, tens of millions of people in Egypt and other colonies.

Understandably, this fancy idea of Hyndman's pleased the British bourgeoisie (the Conservatives and Liberals). It can also be understood that British Social-Democrats—be it said to their credit—would not tolerate this disgrace and shame and heatedly opposed it.

The struggle was a long and stubborn one; attempts at a compromise were made, but Hyndman was incorrigible. It is greatly to the advantage of British socialism that Hyndman was forced to leave the executive at this Conference and the composition of the executive was, in general, changed by 75 per cent (of its eight members only two were re-elected—Quelch and Irving).

The Conference adopted a resolution against the old executive which reads as follows:

> "This Conference congratulates our French and German comrades on their vigorous opposition to the increase of armaments in their respective countries, and pledges the British Socialist Party, as an integral part of the International Socialist Party, bound by the resolutions on war passed at Stuttgart and Basle, 1912, to pursue the same policy in Great Britain, with the object of checking the growth of all forms of militarism and of reducing the existing abominably high expenditure on armaments."

The resolution is sharply worded. But the truth has to be told, even if sharply. The British Social-Democrats would have forfeited their right to struggle against the opportunists of the so-called Independent (independent of socialism, but dependent on the Liberals) Labour Party if they had not sharply opposed the nationalist sins of their executive.

Let the bourgeois press display their wrath and their buffoonery over the internal struggle among Social-Democrats. The Social-Democrats do not regard themselves as saints; they know that now and again the proletariat becomes infected by some dirty disease from the bourgeoisie in its environment—this is inevitable in filthy, disgusting capitalist society. But the Social-Democrats are able to heal their party with direct and fearless criticism. In Britain, too, they will certainly cure the disease.

Written on May 5 (18), 1913
Published in *Pravda* No. 109,
May 14, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 93-95

ARMAMENTS AND CAPITALISM

Britain is one of the richest, freest and most advanced countries in the world. The armaments fever has long afflicted British "society" and the British Government, in exactly the same way as it has the French, German and other governments.

And now the British press, particularly the labour press, is publishing very interesting data, which reveal the ingenious capitalist "mechanics" of arms manufacture. Britain's naval armaments are particularly great. Britain's shipyards (Vickers, Armstrong, Brown and others) are world-famous. Hundreds and thousands of millions of rubles are being spent by Britain and other countries on war preparations, and of course it is all being done exclusively in the interests of peace, for the preservation of culture, in the interests of the country, civilisation, etc.

And we find that admirals and prominent statesmen of both parties, Conservative and Liberal, are shareholders and directors of shipyards, and of gunpowder, dynamite, ordnance and other factories. A shower of gold is pouring straight into the pockets of bourgeois politicians, who have got together in an exclusive international gang engaged in instigating an armaments race among the peoples and *fleecing* these trustful, stupid, dull and submissive peoples like sheep.

Armaments are considered a national matter, a matter of patriotism; it is presumed that everyone maintains strict secrecy. But the shipyards, the ordnance, dynamite and small-arms factories are *international enterprises*, in which the capitalists of the various countries work together in duping and fleecing the public of the various countries, and making ships and guns alike for Britain against Italy, and for Italy against Britain.

An ingenious capitalist set-up! Civilisation, law and order, culture, peace—and hundreds of millions of rubles being plundered by capitalist businessmen and swindlers in shipbuilding, dynamite manufacture, etc.!

Britain is a member of the Triple Entente, which is hostile to the Triple Alliance. Italy is a member of the Triple Alliance. The well-known firm of Vickers (Britain) has *branches* in Italy. The shareholders and directors of this firm (through the venal press and through venal parliamentary "figures", Conservative and Liberal alike) incite Britain against Italy, and vice versa. And profit is taken both from the workers of Britain and those of Italy; the people are fleeced in both countries.

Conservative and Liberal Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament are almost all shareholders in these firms. They work hand in glove. The son of the "great" Liberal Minister, Gladstone, is a director of the Armstrong concern. Rear-Admiral Bacon, the celebrated naval specialist and a high official at the Admiralty, has been appointed to a post at an ordnance works in Coventry at a salary of £7,000 (over 60,000 rubles). The salary of the British Prime Minister is £5,000 (about 45,000 rubles).

The same thing, of course, takes place in all capitalist countries. Governments manage the affairs of the capitalist class, and the managers are well paid. The managers are shareholders themselves. And they shear the sheep together, under cover of speeches about "patriotism"....

Written on May 16 (29), 1913
Published in *Pravda* No. 115,
May 21, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 106-07

BOURGEOIS FINANCIAL MAGNATES AND POLITICIANS

The British Labour press is continuing its exposure of the connection between financial "operations" and high politics. These revelations deserve the attention of the workers of all countries because they expose the very basis of state administration in capitalist society. The words of Karl Marx that the government is a committee for managing the affairs of the capitalist class[66] are confirmed to the full.

The Labour Leader No. 24 (June 12, N.S.), devotes a whole page to listing the names of British Ministers (7 names), ex-Ministers (3 names), Bishops and Archdeacons (12 names), Peers (47 names), Members of Parliament (18 names), big newspaper owners, financiers and bankers, who are shareholders or directors in joint-stock companies dealing mainly in munitions.

The author of the article, Walton Newbold, collected all this information from official banking, commercial and industrial, financial and other sources, from the reports of patriotic organisations (like the *Navy League*), etc.

We get a picture quite similar to that once drawn from Russian data by Rubakin, who showed how many big landowners in Russia were members of the Council of State,[67] high dignitaries—now we may add, members of the State Duma, shareholders or directors of joint-stock companies, etc. It is high time to bring Rubakin's facts up to date by using the latest reference books, particularly adding data on participation in financial, commercial and industrial undertakings.

Our liberals (especially the Cadets) have a strong aversion for the "theory" of the class struggle, and particularly insist on their view that the governments of modern states *can* stand *outside* classes or *above* classes. But what can you do, gentlemen, if the "theory" which is so distasteful to you corresponds exactly to reality? If all the *fundamentals* of contemporary legislation and contemporary politics clearly show us the class character of the structure and administration of all contemporary states? If even information about the personalities of prominent politicians, members of parliament, high officials, etc., reveals the inseparable connection existing between economic rule and political rule?

The denial or concealment of the class struggle is the worst form of hypocrisy in politics; is banking on the ignorance and prejudices of the least developed strata of the people, the small proprietors (peasants, handicraftsmen, etc.), who are furthest removed from the most acute and direct struggle of classes, and cling as before, as of old, to their patriarchal views. But what is ignorance and backwardness in the peasant is a subtle method of corrupting the people and keeping them in slavery on the part of the liberal intellectuals.

Written on June 6 (19), 1913
Published in *Pravda* No. 142,
June 23, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 241-42

IN AUSTRALIA

A general election recently took place in Australia. The Labour Party, which had a majority in the Lower House—44 seats out of 75—was defeated. It now has only 36 seats out of 75. The majority has passed to the Liberals, but this majority is a very unstable one, because 30 of the 36 seats in the Upper House are held by Labour.

What sort of peculiar capitalist country is this, in which the workers' representatives predominate in the *Upper* House and, till recently, did so in the Lower House as well, and yet the capitalist system is in no danger?

An English correspondent of the German labour press recently explained the situation, which is very often misrepresented by bourgeois writers.

The Australian Labour Party does not even call itself a socialist party. Actually it is a liberal-bourgeois party, while the so-called Liberals in Australia are really Conservatives.

This strange and incorrect use of terms in naming parties is not unique. In America, for example, the slave-owners of yesterday are called Democrats, and in France, enemies of socialism, petty bourgeois, are called Radical Socialists! In order to understand the real significance of parties, one must examine not their signboards but their class character and the historical conditions of each individual country.

Australia is a young British colony.

Capitalism in Australia is still quite youthful. The country is only just taking shape as an independent state. The workers are for the most part emigrants from Britain. They left the country at the time when the liberal-labour policy held almost undivided sway there, when the masses of the British workers were *Liberals*. Even now the majority of the skilled factory workers in Britain are Liberals or semi-Liberals. This is the result of the exceptionally favourable, monopolist position enjoyed by Britain in the second half of the last century. Only now are the masses of the workers in Britain turning (but turning slowly) towards socialism.

And while in Britain the so-called Labour Party is an *alliance* between the non-socialist trade unions and the extremely opportunist Independent Labour Party, in Australia the Labour Party is the *unalloyed* representative of the *non*-socialist workers' trade unions.

The leaders of the Australian Labour Party are trade union officials, everywhere the most moderate and "capital-serving" element, and in Australia, altogether peaceable, purely liberal.

The ties binding the separate states into a united Australia are still very weak. The Labour Party has had to concern itself with developing and strengthening these ties, and with establishing central government.

In Australia the Labour Party has done what in other countries was done by the Liberals, namely, introduced a uniform tariff for the whole country, a uniform educational law, a uniform land tax and uniform factory legislation.

Naturally, when Australia is finally developed and consolidated as an independent capitalist state, the condition of the workers will change, as also will the *liberal* Labour Party, which will make way for a *socialist* worker's party. Australia is an illustration of the conditions under which *exceptions* to the rule are possible. The rule is: a socialist workers' party in a capitalist country. The exception is: a liberal Labour Party which arises only for a short time by virtue of specific conditions that are abnormal for capitalism in general.

Those Liberals in Europe and in Russia who try to "teach" the people that class struggle is unnecessary by citing the example of Australia, only deceive themselves and others. It is ridiculous to think of transplanting Australian conditions (an undeveloped, young colony, populated by liberal British workers) to countries where the state is long established and capitalism well developed.

Written on June 8 (21), 1913
Published in *Pravda* No. 134,
June 13, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 216-17

EXPOSURE OF THE BRITISH OPPORTUNISTS

A Parliamentary by-election recently took place in Leicester, England.

This election is of enormous importance in principle, and every socialist interested in the very important question of the attitude of the proletariat towards the liberal bourgeoisie in general, and the British socialist movement in particular, should ponder deeply over the Leicester election.

Leicester is a *two*-member constituency and each elector has *two* votes. There are only a few constituencies of this kind in Britain, but they particularly favour a tacit *bloc* between the Socialists and the Liberals, as is emphasised by the correspondent in Britain of the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. It was precisely in such constituencies that the most prominent of the leaders of the so-called Independent (independent of socialism, but dependent on liberalism) Labour Party were elected to Parliament. The I.L.P. leaders, Keir Hardie, Philip Snowden and Ramsay MacDonald, were returned by such constituencies.

And in these constituencies the Liberals, who are in the ascendancy, call on their supporters to cast one vote for the Socialist and one for the Liberal, provided, of course, that the Socialist is a "reasonable", moderate, "independent" one and not an irreconcilable Social-Democrat, whom the British Liberals and liquidators, no less than the Russian, know how to curse as an anarcho-syndicalist, etc.!

What actually takes place, therefore, is the formation of a bloc between the Liberals and the moderate, opportunist Socialists. Actually, the British "independents" (for whom our liquidators express such tender feelings) *depend* on the Liberals. The conduct of the "independents" in the British Parliament constantly confirms this dependence.

It happened that the I.L.P. member for Leicester, none other than the party leader, MacDonald, resigned for personal reasons.

What was to be done?

The Liberals, of course, put forward their candidate.

Leicester is a factory town with a predominantly proletarian population.

The local I.L.P. organisation called a conference which by 67 votes against 8 decided *to put forward a candidate.* No sooner said than done. Banton, a Town Councillor and prominent member of the I.L.P., was nominated.

Then the Executive Committee of this Party, which assigns the money for the election campaign (and elections in Britain are very costly!), *refused* to endorse Banton's candidature!

The opportunist Executive Committee opposed the local workers.

The Leicester branch of the other British socialist party, which is not opportunist and is *really* independent of the Liberals, then sent its representative to the Leicester I.L.P. and invited them to support *its* candidate, Hartley, a member of the British Socialist Party, a very popular figure in the labour movement, an ex-member of the Independent Labour Party, who left it because of its opportunism.

The members of the Leicester branch of the I.L.P. were in an awkward position: they were heart and soul in favour of Hartley, but ... but what of the discipline in their party, the decision of their Executive Committee? The Leicester people found a way out: they closed the meeting, and *each in his private capacity* declared for Hartley. Next day a huge meeting of workers endorsed Hartley's candidature. Banton himself sent a telegram stating that he would vote for Hartley. The Leicester trade unions declared for Hartley.

The I.L.P. Parliamentary group intervened and published *a protest* in the *Liberal* press (which, like our *Rech* and *Sovremenka*,[68] helps the opportunists) against Hartley's candidature, against "undermining" MacDonald!

The election, of course, resulted in a victory for the Liberals. They obtained 10,863 votes, the Conservatives 9,279, and Hartley 2,580.

Class-conscious workers in various countries quite often adopt a "tolerant" attitude toward the British I.L.P. This is a great mistake. The *betrayal* of the workers' cause in Leicester by the I.L.P. is no accident, but the result of the *entire* opportunist policy of the Independent Labour Party. The sympathies of all *real* Social-Democrats should be with those British Social-Democrats who are determinedly combating the Liberal corruption of the workers by the "Independent" Labour Party in Britain.

Rabochaya Pravda No. 3,
July 16, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 272-74

CLASS WAR IN DUBLIN

In Dublin, the capital of Ireland—a city of a not highly industrial type, with a population of half a million—the class struggle, which permeates the whole life of capitalist society everywhere, has become accentuated to the point of class war. The police have positively gone wild; drunken policemen assault peaceful workers, break into houses, torment the aged, women and children. Hundreds of workers (over 400) have been injured and *two killed*—such are the casualties of this war. All prominent workers' leaders have been arrested. People are thrown into prison for making the most peaceful speeches. The city is like an armed camp.

What has happened? How could such a war have flared up in a peaceable, cultured, civilised free state?

Ireland is something of a British Poland, only rather more like Galicia than the Poland represented by Warsaw, Lodz and Dombrowski. National oppression and Catholic reaction have turned the proletarians of this unhappy country into paupers, the peasants into toilworn, ignorant and dull slaves of the priesthood, and the bourgeoisie into a phalanx, masked by nationalist phrases, of capitalists, of despots over the workers; finally, the administration has been turned into a gang accustomed to every kind of violence.

At the present moment the Irish nationalists (i.e., the Irish bourgeoisie) are the victors. They are buying up the lands of the English landlords; they are getting national *self-government* (the famous Home Rule for which such a long and stubborn struggle has been going on between Ireland and England); they will freely govern "their own" country jointly with "their own" Irish priests.

Well, this Irish nationalist bourgeoisie is celebrating its "national" victory, its maturity in "affairs of state" by declaring a war to the death on the Irish labour movement.

An English Lord-Lieutenant lives in Dublin, but in fact he has less power than the Dublin capitalist leader, a certain Murphy, publisher of the *Independent* ("Independent"—my eye!), principal shareholder and director of the Dublin tramways, and a shareholder in many capitalist enterprises in Dublin. Murphy has declared, on behalf of all the Irish capitalists, of course, that he is ready to spend three-quarters of a million pounds (nearly seven million rubles) to destroy the Irish trade unions.

And these unions have begun to develop magnificently. The Irish proletariat, awakening to class-consciousness, is pressing the Irish bourgeois scoundrels engaged in celebrating their "national" victory. It has found a talented leader in the person of Comrade *Larkin*, Secretary of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. Larkin is a remarkable speaker, a man of seething Irish energy, who has performed miracles among the unskilled workers—that mass of the British proletariat which in Britain is so often cut off from the advanced workers by the cursed petty-bourgeois, liberal, aristocratic spirit of the British skilled worker.

A new spirit has been aroused in the Irish workers' unions. The unskilled workers have brought unparalleled animation into the trade unions. Even the women have begun to organise—a thing hitherto unknown in Catholic Ireland. So far as organisation of the workers is concerned Dublin looks like becoming one of the foremost towns in the whole of Great Britain. The country that used to be typified by the fat, well-fed Catholic priest and the poor, starving, ragged worker who wore his rags even on Sunday because he could not afford Sunday clothes, that country, though it bears a double and triple national yoke, has begun to turn into a country with an organised army of the proletariat.

Well, Murphy proclaimed a crusade of the bourgeoisie against Larkin and "Larkinism". To begin with, 200 tramwaymen were dismissed in order to provoke a strike during the exhibition and *embitter* the whole struggle. The Transport Workers' Union declared a strike and demanded the reinstatement of the discharged men. Murphy engineered lock-outs. The workers retaliated by downing tools. War raged all along the line. Passions flared up.

Larkin—incidentally, he is the grandson of the famous Larkin executed in 1867 for participating in the Irish liberation movement—delivered fiery speeches at meetings. In these speeches he pointed out that the party of the English bourgeois enemies of Irish Home Rule was openly calling for resistance to the government, was threatening revolution, was organising armed resistance to Home Rule and with absolute impunity was flooding the country with revolutionary appeals.

But what the reactionaries, the *English* chauvinists Carson, Londonderry and Bonar Law (the English Purishkeviches, the nationalists who are persecuting Ireland), may do the proletarian socialist may not. Larkin was arrested. A meeting called by the workers was banned.

Ireland, however, is not Russia. The attempt to suppress the right of assembly evoked a storm of indignation. Larkin *had to be* tried. At the trial Larkin became the accuser and, in effect, put Murphy in the dock. By cross-questioning witnesses Larkin proved that Murphy had had long conversations with the Lord-Lieutenant on the eve of his, Larkin's, arrest. Larkin declared the police to be in Murphy's pay, and no one dared gainsay him.

Larkin was released on bail (political liberty cannot be abolished at one stroke). Larkin declared that he would appear at a meeting no matter what happened. And indeed, he came to one disguised, and began to speak to the crowd. The police recognised him, seized him and beat him up. For two days the dictatorship of the police truncheon raged, crowds were clubbed, women and children were brutally treated. The police broke into workers' homes. A worker named *Nolan*, a member of the Transport Workers' Union, was beaten to death. Another died of injuries.

On Thursday, September 4 (August 22, O.S.), Nolan's funeral took place. The proletariat of Dublin followed in a procession 50,000 strong behind the body of their comrade. The police brutes lay low, not daring to annoy the crowd, and exemplary order prevailed. "This is a more magnificent demonstration than when they buried Parnell" (the celebrated Irish nationalist leader), said an old Irishman to a German correspondent.

The Dublin events mark a turning point in the history of the labour movement and of socialism in Ireland. Murphy has threatened to destroy the Irish trade unions. He has succeeded only in destroying the last remnants of the influence of the Irish nationalist bourgeoisie over the Irish proletariat. He has helped to steel the independent revolutionary working-class movement in Ireland, which is free of nationalist prejudices.

This was seen immediately at the Trades Union Congress which opened on September 1 (August 19, O.S.), in Manchester. The Dublin events inflamed the delegates—despite the resistance of the opportunist trade union leaders with their petty-bourgeois spirit and their admiration for the bosses. The Dublin workers' delegation was given an ovation. Delegate Partridge, Chairman of the Dublin branch of the Engineers' Union, spoke about the abominable outrages committed by the police in Dublin. A young working girl had just gone to bed when the police raided her house. The girl hid in the closet, but was dragged out by the hair. The police were drunk. These "men" (if one may call them such) beat up ten-year-old lads and even five-year-old children!

Partridge was twice arrested for making speeches which the judge himself admitted were peaceful. "I am sure," said Partridge, "that I would now be arrested if I were to recite the Lord's Prayer in public."

The Manchester Congress sent a delegation to Dublin. The bourgeoisie there again took up the weapon of nationalism (just like the bourgeois nationalists in Poland, or in the Ukraine, or among the Jews!) declaring that "Englishmen have no business on Irish soil!" But, *fortunately*, the nationalists have already lost their influence over the workers.*

Speeches delivered at the Manchester Congress were of a kind that had not been heard for a long time. A resolution was moved to transfer the whole Congress to Dublin, and to organise a general strike throughout Britain. Smillie, the Chairman of the Miners' Union, stated that the Dublin methods would compel all British workers to resort to revolution and that they would be able to learn the use of arms.

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* The Irish nationalists are already expressing the fear that Larkin will organise an independent Irish workers' party, which will have to be reckoned with in the first Irish national parliament.

The masses of the British workers are slowly but surely taking a new path—they are abandoning the defence of the petty privileges of the labour aristocracy for their own great heroic struggle for a new system of society. And once on this path the British proletariat, with their energy and organisation, will bring socialism about more quickly and securely than anywhere else.

Severnaya Pravda No. 23, August 29, 1913; *Nash Put* No. 5, August 30, 1913	*Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 332-36

A WEEK AFTER THE DUBLIN MASSACRE

On Sunday, September 7 (August 25, O.S.), exactly a week after the police massacre, the Dublin workers organised a huge meeting to protest against the conduct of the Irish capitalists and the Irish police.

The meeting took place in the same street (O'Connell Street) and at the same spot where the meeting banned by the police was to have taken place the previous Sunday. It is a historic spot, a spot where it is most convenient to organise meetings and where they are most frequently held in Dublin.

The police kept out of sight. The streets were filled with workers. There were crowds of people, but complete order prevailed. "Last Sunday," exclaimed an Irish speaker, "the police truncheon reigned here without reason; today reason reigns without the police truncheon."

Britain *has* a constitution—and the authorities did not dare to bring their drunken policemen into action for the second time. Three platforms were put up and six speakers, including representatives of the English proletariat, condemned the crime perpetrated against the people, called upon the workers to display international solidarity, to wage a common struggle.

A resolution was unanimously adopted demanding freedom of assembly and association, and calling for an immediate investigation—under the direction of independent persons and with a guarantee of publicity for all the proceedings—of the conduct of the police the previous Sunday.

In London a magnificent meeting was held in Trafalgar Square. Groups of socialists and workers came with their banners. There were many posters with cartoons and slogans on topical events. The crowd particularly applauded a poster depicting a policeman waving a red flag with the inscription "Silence!"

Outstanding speeches were made by Ben Tillett, who showed that the "Liberal" government of Britain is no better than a reactionary one, and Partridge, Dublin Secretary of the Engineers' Union, who described in detail the shameless acts of police violence in Dublin.

It is instructive to note that the principal slogan at the London and Dublin meetings was the demand for freedom of association. This is quite understandable. Britain *has* the foundations of political liberty, *has* a constitutional regime, generally speaking. The freedom of association demanded by the workers is one of the reforms absolutely necessary and quite achievable under the present constitutional regime (just as achievable as, say, the partial reform of workers' insurance in Russia).

Freedom of association is equally indispensable to the workers of Britain and of Russia. And the British workers quite rightly advance this slogan of a political reform essential to them, perfectly well aware of the path to be followed for its achievement and of its complete feasibility under the British Constitution (just as the Russian workers would be right in advancing the partial demand for amendments to the Insurance Act).

In Russia, however, precisely those general foundations of political liberty are absent *without which* the demand for freedom of association is simply ridiculous and is merely a current liberal phrase designed to deceive the people by suggesting that the path of reform is possible in our country. In Russia the fight for freedom of association—freedom most urgently needed by both the workers and the entire people—cannot be conducted *without* contrasting the impotent and false reformism of the liberals with the consistent democracy of the workers, who have no reformist illusions.

Severnaya Pravda No. 27,
September 3, 1913;
Nash Put No. 8, September 3, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 348-49

HARRY QUELCH

On Wednesday, September 17 (September 4, O.S.), Comrade Harry Quelch, leader of the British Social-Democrats, died in London. The British Social-Democratic organisation was formed in 1884 and was called the Social-Democratic Federation. In 1909 the name was changed to Social-Democratic Party, and in 1911, after a number of independently existing socialist groups amalgamated with it, it assumed the name of the British Socialist Party.

Harry Quelch was one of the most energetic and devoted workers in the British Social-Democratic movement. He was active not only as a Social-Democratic Party worker, but also as a trade unionist. The London Society of Compositors repeatedly elected him its Chairman, and he was several times Chairman of the London Trades Council.

Quelch was the editor of *Justice*, the weekly organ of the British Social-Democrats, as well as editor of the party monthly journal, the *Social-Democrat*.

He took a very active part in all the work of the British Social-Democratic movement and regularly addressed party and public meetings. On many occasions he represented British Social-Democracy at international congresses and on the International Socialist Bureau. Incidentally, when he attended the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress he was persecuted by the Württemberg Government, which *expelled* him from Stuttgart (without trial, by police order, as an alien) for referring at a public meeting to the Hague Conference[69] as a "thieves' supper". When, the day following Quelch's expulsion, the Congress resumed its session, the British delegates left empty the chair on which Quelch had sat, and hung a notice on it bearing the inscription: "Here sat Harry Quelch, now expelled by the Württemberg Government."

The South Germans often boast of their hatred for the Prussians because of the Prussian red tape, bureaucracy and police rule, but they themselves behave like the worst Prussians where a proletarian socialist is concerned.

The historical conditions for the activities of the British Social-Democrats, whose leader Quelch was, are of a very particular kind. In the most advanced land of capitalism and political liberty, the British bourgeoisie (who as far back as the seventeenth century settled accounts with the absolute monarchy in a rather democratic way) managed in the nineteenth century to *split* the British working-class movement. In the middle of the nineteenth century Britain enjoyed an almost complete monopoly in the world market. Thanks to this monopoly the profits acquired by British capital were extraordinarily high, so that it was possible for some crumbs of these profits to be thrown to the aristocracy of labour, the skilled factory workers.

This aristocracy of labour, which at that time earned tolerably good wages, boxed itself up in narrow, self-interested craft unions, and isolated itself from the mass of the proletariat, while in politics it supported the liberal bourgeoisie. And to this very day perhaps nowhere in the world are there so many liberals among the advanced workers as in Britain.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, however, things began to change. Britain's monopoly was challenged by America, Germany, etc. The economic basis for the narrow, petty-bourgeois trade unionism and liberalism among British workers has been destroyed. Socialism is again raising its head in Britain, getting through to the masses and growing irresistibly *despite* the rank opportunism of the British near-socialist intelligentsia.

Quelch was in the front ranks of those who fought steadfastly and with conviction against opportunism and a liberal-labour policy in the British working-class movement. True, isolation from the masses sometimes infected the British Social-Democrats with a certain sectarianism. Hyndman, the leader and founder of Social-Democracy in Britain, has even slipped into jingoism. But the party of the Social-

Democrats* has fought him on this, and over the whole of Britain the Social-Democrats, and they *alone*, have for decades been carrying on systematic propaganda and agitation in the Marxist spirit. This is the great historical service rendered by Quelch and his comrades. The fruits of the activities of the Marxist Quelch will be reaped in full measure by the British working-class movement in the next few years.

In conclusion we cannot refrain from mentioning Quelch's sympathy for the Russian Social-Democrats and the assistance he rendered them. Eleven years ago the Russian Social-Democratic newspaper had to be printed in London. The British Social-Democrats, headed by Quelch, readily made their printing-plant available. As a consequence, Quelch himself had to "squeeze up". A corner was boarded off at the printing-works by a thin partition to serve him as editorial room. This corner contained a very small writing-table, a bookshelf above it, and a chair. When the present writer visited Quelch in this "editorial office" there was no room for another chair....

Pravda Truda No. 1,
September 11, 1913
Nash Put No. 16,
September 12, 1913;

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 369-71

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* The party here referred to is the British Socialist Party, founded in 1911.—*Ed.*

CIVILISED BARBARISM

Britain and France are the most civilised countries in the world. London and Paris are the world's capitals, with populations of six and three million, respectively. The distance between them is an eight- to nine-hour journey.

One can imagine how great is the commercial intercourse between these two capitals, what masses of goods and of people are constantly moving from the one to the other.

And yet the richest, the most civilised and the freest countries in the world are now discussing, in fear and trepidation—by no means for the first time!—the "difficult" question of whether a tunnel can be built under the English Channel (which separates Britain from the European Continent).

Engineers have long been of the opinion that it can. The capitalists of Britain and France have mountains of money. Profit from capital invested in such an enterprise would be absolutely certain.

What, then, is holding the matter up?

Britain is afraid of—invasion! A tunnel, you see, would, "if anything should happen", facilitate the invasion of Britain by enemy troops. That is why the British military authorities have, not for the first time, wrecked the plan to build the tunnel.

The madness and blindness of the civilised nations makes astonishing reading. Needless to say, it would take only a few seconds with modern technical devices to bring traffic in the tunnel to a halt, and to wreck the tunnel completely.

But the civilised nations have driven themselves into the position of barbarians. Capitalism has brought about a situation in which the bourgeoisie, in order to hoodwink the workers, is *compelled* to frighten the British people with idiotic tales about "invasion". Capitalism has brought about a situation in which a whole group of capitalists who stand to lose "good business" through the digging of the tunnel are doing their utmost to wreck this plan and hold up technical progress.

The Britishers' fear of the tunnel is fear of themselves. Capitalist barbarism is stronger than civilisation.

On all sides, at every step one comes across problems which man is quite capable of solving *immediately*, but capitalism is in the way. It has amassed enormous wealth—and has made men the *slaves* of this wealth. It has solved the most complicated technical problems—and has blocked the application of technical improvements because of the poverty and ignorance of millions of the population, because of the stupid avarice of a handful of millionaires.

Civilisation, freedom and wealth under capitalism call to mind the rich glutton who is rotting alive but will not let what is young live on.

But the young is growing and will emerge supreme in spite of all.

Pravda Truda No. 6,
September 17, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 388-89

THE LIBERALS AND THE LAND PROBLEM IN BRITAIN

On Saturday, October 11 (September 28, O.S.), the British Liberal Minister, Lloyd George, opened his "Land Campaign" in two "brilliant" speeches delivered in the town of Bedford. Just as our Kit Kitych Guchkov[70] promised "to settle accounts" with the Russian privileged and all-powerful landowners, so the British Liberal Minister promised to start a campaign on the land question, to expose the landlords and appeal to the people on the issue of a "radical" (Lloyd George is extremely radical!) land reform.

The Liberal press in Britain tried to give their leader's campaign as impressive an appearance as possible. Publicity, publicity at all costs! If the speech is too long, let us publish a brief "summary" of it, let us call it a land "charter", let us embellish it in such a way as to conceal the diplomatic subterfuges of the parliamentary huckster behind a long list of reforms—a minimum wage, 100,000 cottages for the workers, and the "compulsory alienation of the land at its *net* [!!] value to the landlords".

In order to show the reader *how* the Minister of the British Liberal bourgeoisie carries on agitation among the people, we shall quote several passages from Lloyd George's Bedford speeches.

"There is no question more vital, ... than the question ... of the land!" exclaimed the speaker. "It enters into everything—the food the people eat, the water they drink, the houses they dwell in, the industries upon which their livelihood depends. And to whom does the land belong in Britain? To a handful of rich people! One-third of all the land belongs to members of the House of Lords. "Landlordism is the greatest of al monopolies in this land." The power of the landlords is boundless. They may evict their tenants, and devastate the land worse than an enemy would. "Now, I am not attacking the landlords either individually or as a class," the Minister took pains to declare, "but can such a state of affairs be allowed to continue?"

During the last few decades the agricultural population has declined from over two million to one and a half million, while the number of gamekeepers has increased from 9,000 to 23,000. There is no other country in the world where there is so much uncultivated land and where the farmers suffer so much from game bred by the rich for their amusement.

The wealth of Britain is increasing at an astonishing rate. But what about the farm labourers? Nine-tenths of them earn less than twenty shillings and sixpence (about 10 rubles) per week, a sum which in workhouses isconsidered to be barely sufficient to prevent an inmate from starving. Sixty per cent of the farm labourers earn less than eighteen shillings (about 9 rubles) per week.

The Conservatives propose that the land be purchased in small holdings. "But him who talks about purchase", thundered the British Rodichev,[71] "I shall ask: *at what price*?" (*Laughter*.)

Will not the high price crush the small buyer? Will he not be crushed by high rates? There is a Small Holdings Act which is supposed to provide land for workers. Here is an example. The total rates and taxes on a plot of land are assessed at £30 (nearly 270 rubles). This land is bought and resold to poor people in small holdings. The price they pay turns out to be £60!

The depopulation of rural England threatens to make our country defenceless—without a strong peasantry there can be no strong army. Now, can either a Russian or a British Liberal get along without playing on crude nationalist and chauvinist sentiments?

"The landlords did not create the land," exclaimed Lloyd George, "the country must choose between the power of the landlords and the welfare of the workers. We must act firmly and determinedly against monopoly—and property in land is the greatest monopoly. The tenant farmer must obtain guarantees that he will not be evicted, or deprived of the fruits of his energy and skill." (A voice: "What is the remedy?") "We must act, enough of timid attempts at half-measures. We must deal with it thoroughly, we must do as businessmen do. It is no use tinkering and mending, we must put the land monopoly under better control.

"We must secure a minimum wage for the labourer, shorten the working day, give him a decent, comfortable cottage and a plot of land so that he can grow a certain amount of produce for his family. We must secure for him a *ladder of progress* in order that the 'enterprising' labourer may rise from the small allotment, the kitchen garden, to the small holding. And the most enterprising might look forward to taking their position as one of the substantial farmers in the community. You are tempted with the charms of emigration to America and Australia. But we want the British worker to find sustenance for himself, a free life and comfort for himself and for his children right here, in England, in our own country."

Thunderous applause.... And one can almost hear the isolated voices of those in the audience who were not fooled (like the one who shouted: "What is the remedy?") saying: "He sings well; but will he do anything?"

He sings well, this British Liberal Minister, this favourite of the petty-bourgeois crowd, a past master in the art of breaking strikes by brazen deception of the workers, the best servant of British capital, which enslaves both the British workers and the 300 million population of India. What power, however, induced this hardened politician, this lackey of the money-bags, to make such "radical" speeches?

The power of the labour movement.

In Britain there is no conscripted army. The people cannot be restrained by violence—they can be restrained only by deception. The labour movement is growing irresistibly. The people's attention must be diverted, the masses must be "engaged" with high-sounding schemes for reform, a pretence must be made of waging war on the Conservatives, sops must be promised to prevent the masses from losing faith in the Liberals, to ensure that they follow the industrial and financial capitalists like sheep following shepherds.

And the promises of reform ... does not the English proverb say that promises are like pie-crusts, made to be broken?

Lloyd George makes promises and the Liberal Cabinet as a whole will cut them to a fifth before setting about their realisation. The Conservatives, in their turn, will make a *further* cut, the result being a tenth.

The reformism of the British bourgeoisie is the clearest indication of the growth of a deep-going revolutionary movement among the British working class. No eloquent orator, no Liberal charlatan can stop this movement.

Za Pravdu No. 8,
October 12, 1913

Collected Works, Vol. 19,
pp. 439-42

THE BRITISH LIBERALS AND IRELAND

What is taking place today in the British Parliament in connection with the Bill on Irish *Home Rule* is of exceptional interest as far as class relationships and elucidation of the national and the agrarian problems are concerned.

For centuries England has enslaved Ireland, condemned the Irish peasants to unparalleled misery and gradual extinction from starvation, driven them off the land and compelled hundreds of thousands and even millions of them to leave their native country and emigrate to America. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ireland had a population of five and a half millions; today the population is only four and one-third millions. Ireland has become depopulated. Over five million Irish emigrated to America in the course of the nineteenth century, so that there are now *more* Irish in the United States than there are in Ireland!

The appalling destitution and sufferings of the Irish peasantry are an instructive example of the lengths to which the landowners and the liberal bourgeoisie of a "dominant" nation will go. Britain owes her "brilliant" economic development and the "prosperity" of her industry and commerce largely to her treatment of the Irish peasantry, which recalls the misdeeds of the Russian serf-owner Saltychikha.

While Britain "flourished", Ireland moved towards extinction and remained an undeveloped, semi-barbarous, purely agrarian country, a land of poverty-stricken tenant farmers. But much as the "enlightened and liberal" British bourgeoisie desired to perpetuate Ireland's enslavement and poverty, reform inevitably approached, the more so that the revolutionary eruptions of the Irish people's fight for liberty and land became more and more ominous. The year 1861 saw the formation of the Irish revolutionary organisation of *Fenians.* Irish settlers in America gave it every assistance.

With the formation, in 1868, of the government of Gladstone—that hero of the liberal bourgeoisie and obtuse philistines—the *era of reform* in Ireland set in, an era which has dragged on very nicely till the present day, i.e., just under half a century. Oh, the wise statesmen of the liberal bourgeoisie are very well able to "make haste slowly" in the matter of reform!

Karl Marx, who had been living in London for over fifteen years, followed the struggle of the Irish with great interest and sympathy. He wrote to Frederick Engels on November 2, 1867: "I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the English workers in favour of Fenianism.... I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation...." Reverting to the same subject in a letter dated November 30th of the same year, Marx wrote: "The question now is, what shall we advise the English workers? In my opinion they must make the repeal of the Union [the abolition of the union with Ireland] (in short, the affair of 1783, only democratised and adapted to the conditions of the time) an article of their *pronunziamento.* This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the programme of an *English* [workers'] party." And Marx went on to show that what the Irish needed was Home Rule and independence of Britain, an agrarian revolution and tariffs against Britain.

Such was the programme proposed to the British workers by Marx, in the interests of Irish freedom, of accelerating the social development and freedom of the British workers; because the British workers could not become free so long as they helped to keep another nation in slavery (or even allowed it).

Alas! Owing to a number of special historical causes, the British workers of the last third of the nineteenth century proved dependent upon the Liberals, impregnated with the spirit of liberal-labour policy. They proved to be, not at the head of nations and classes fighting for liberty, but in the wake of the contemptible lackeys of the money-bags, the British Liberals.

And the Liberals have for *half a century* been dragging out Ireland's liberation, which has not been completed to this day! It was not until the twentieth century that the Irish peasant began to turn from a tenant farmer into a freeholder, but the Liberals have imposed upon him a system of *land purchase at a "fair" price*! He has paid, and will continue to pay for many years, millions upon millions to the British landlords as a reward for their having robbed him for centuries and reduced him to a state of chronic starvation. The British liberal bourgeois has made the Irish peasant thank the landlord for this in hard cash....[72]

A *Home Rule* Bill for Ireland is now going through Parliament. But in Ireland there is the Northern province of Ulster, which is inhabited partly by English-born Protestants as distinct from the Catholic Irish. Well then, the British Conservatives, led by Carson, the British version of our Black-Hundred landlord Purishkevich, have raised a frightful outcry against Irish Home Rule. This, they say, means subjecting Ulstermen to an alien people of alien creed! Lord Carson has threatened rebellion, and has organised gangs of reactionary armed thugs for this purpose.

An empty threat, of course. There can be no question of a rebellion by a handful of hoodlums. Nor could there be any question of an Irish Parliament (whose powers are determined by *British* law) "oppressing" the Protestants.

It is simply a question of the reactionary landlords trying to *scare* the Liberals.

And the Liberals are losing their nerve, bowing to the reactionaries, making concessions to them, offering to conduct a *referendum* in Ulster and put off reform for Ulster for *six* years!

The haggling between the Liberals and the reactionaries continues. Reform can wait: the Irish have waited half a century; they can wait a little longer; you can't very well "offend" the landlords!

Of course, if the Liberals appealed to the people of Britain, to the proletariat, Carson's reactionary gangs would melt away immediately and disappear. The peaceful and full achievement of freedom by Ireland would be guaranteed.

But is it conceivable that the liberal bourgeois will turn to the proletariat for aid against the landlords? Why, the Liberals in Britain are also lackeys of the money-bags, capable only of cringing to the Carsons.

Put Pravdy No. 34, March 12, 1914	*Collected Works*, Vol. 20, pp. 148-51

CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN BRITAIN

Dealing in *Put Pravdy* No. 34 with the interesting events in Ireland, we spoke of the policy of the British Liberals, who allowed themselves to be scared by the Conservatives.[73]

Since those lines were written, new events have occurred which have transformed that particular conflict (between the Liberals and Conservatives) over the question of Home Rule for Ireland into a general constitutional crisis in Britain.

As the Conservatives threatened a Protestant "rebellion" in Ulster against Home Rule for Ireland, the Liberal Government set part of its troops into motion in order to compel respect for the will of Parliament.

But what happened?

Generals and other British Army officers mutinied!

They declared that they would not fight against Protestant Ulster as that would run counter to their "patriotism", and that they would resign.

The Liberal Government were absolutely stunned by this revolt of the landowners standing at the head of the army. The Liberals have been accustomed to console themselves with constitutional illusions and phrases about the rule of law, and close their eyes to the real relation of forces, to the class struggle. And this real relation of forces has been such that, owing to the cowardice of the bourgeoisie, a number of *pre*-bourgeois, medieval institutions and privileges of the landed gentry have been preserved in Britain.

To suppress the revolt of the aristocratic officers, the Liberal Government should have appealed to the people, to the masses, to the proletariat, but that was something the "enlightened" liberal bourgeois gentlemen feared more than anything else. The government *actually made concessions* to the mutinous officers, persuaded them to withdraw their resignations, and gave them *written assurances* that troops would not be used against Ulster.

Efforts were made to conceal from the people the disgraceful fact that such written assurances had been given (March 21, New Style), and the Liberal leaders, Asquith, Morley and others, lied in the most incredible and shameless manner in their official statements. However, the truth came out. The fact that written promises had been given to the officers was not denied. Apparently, "pressure" was brought to bear by the King. The resignation of Secretary for War Seely, the assumption of his portfolio by Asquith "himself", the re-election of Asquith, the circular to the troops about respect for law—all this was nothing but sheer official hypocrisy. The fact remains that the Liberals yielded to the landowners, who had flouted the constitution.

Stormy scenes ensued in Parliament. The Conservatives heaped well-deserved ridicule and scorn upon the Liberal Government, while the Labour M.P., Ramsay MacDonald, one of the most moderate of the liberal-labour politicians, protested in the strongest terms against the reactionaries' conduct. He said that these people were always ready to fulminate against strikers, but when it came to Ulster they refused to do their duty because the Irish Home Rule Bill affected their class prejudices and interests. (The landowners in Ireland are English, and Home Rule for Ireland, which would mean Home Rule for the Irish bourgeoisie and peasants, threatens to somewhat curtail the voracious appetites of the noble lords.) These people, Ramsay MacDonald continued, thought only of fighting the workers, but when it came to compelling the rich and the property-owners to respect the law, they refused to do their duty.

This revolt of the landowners against the British Parliament, the "all-powerful" Parliament (as the Liberal dullards, especially the Liberal pundits, have thought and said millions of times), is of tremendous significance. March 21 (March 8, Old Style), 1914, will be an epoch-making turning-point, the day when the noble landowners of Britain tore the British constitution and British law to shreds and gave an excellent lesson of the class struggle.

This lesson stemmed from the impossibility of blunting the sharp antagonisms between the proletariat and bourgeoisie of Britain by means of the half-hearted, hypocritical, sham-reformist policy of the Liberals. This lesson will not be lost upon the British labour movement; the working class will now quickly proceed to shake off its philistine faith in the scrap of paper called the British law and constitution, which the British aristocrats have torn up before the eyes of the whole people.

These aristocrats behaved like revolutionaries *of the right* and thereby shattered all conventions, tore aside the veil that prevented the people from seeing the unpleasant but undoubtedly real class struggle. All saw what the bourgeoisie and the Liberals had been hypocritically concealing (they are hypocrites everywhere, but nowhere, perhaps, such consummate hypocrites as in Britain). All saw that the conspiracy to break the will of Parliament had been prepared long ago. Real class rule lay and still lies *outside* of Parliament. The above-mentioned medieval institutions, which for long had been inoperative (or rather seemed to be inoperative), quickly came into operation and proved to be *stronger* than Parliament. And Britain's petty-bourgeois Liberals, with their speeches about reforms and the might of Parliament designed to lull the workers, proved in fact to be straw men, dummies, put up to bamboozle the people. They were quickly "*shut up*" by the aristocracy, the men in *power*.

How many books have been written, especially by German and Russian liberals, in praise of law and social peace in Britain! Everybody knows that the historical mission of the German and Russian liberals is to show servile admiration for what the class struggle has produced in Britain and in France, and to proclaim the results of that struggle as the "truths of science", a science that stands "*above classes*". In reality, however, "law and social peace" in Britain were merely a brief result of the torpor the British proletariat was in approximately between the 1850s and 1900s.

Britain's monopoly has come to an end. World competition has sharpened. The cost of living has gone up. Associations of big capitalists have crushed the small and medium businessmen and come down with their full weight upon the workers. Once more the British proletariat has awakened after the close of the eighteenth century, after the Chartist movement of the 1830s and 1840s.

The constitutional crisis of 1914 will mark another important stage in the history of this awakening.

Put Pravdy No. 57,
April 10, 1914

Collected Works, Vol. 20,
pp. 226-29

From THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

8. THE UTOPIAN KARL MARX AND THE PRACTICAL ROSA LUXEMBURG

Calling Polish independence a "utopia" and repeating this *ad nauseam*, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: Why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

The "practical" Rosa Luxemburg evidently does not know what Karl Marx's attitude to the question of Irish independence was. It is worth while dwelling upon this, so as to show how a *concrete* demand for national independence was analysed from a genuinely Marxist, not opportunist, standpoint.

It was Marx's custom to "sound out" his socialist acquaintances, as he expressed it, to test their intelligence and the strength of their convictions. After making the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels on July 5, 1870, expressing a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian socialist but adding at the same time:

"*Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say, an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

Marx questions a socialist belonging to an oppressor nation about his attitude to the oppressed nation and at once reveals a defect *common* to the socialists of the dominant nations (the English and the Russian): failure to understand their socialist duties towards the downtrodden nations, their echoing of the prejudices acquired from the bourgeoisie of the "dominant nation".

Before passing on to Marx's positive declarations on Ireland, we must point out that in general the attitude of Marx and Engels to the national question was strictly critical, and that they recognised its historically conditioned importance. Thus, Engels wrote to Marx on May 23, 1851, that the study of history was leading him to pessimistic conclusions in regard to Poland, that the importance of Poland was temporary—only until the agrarian revolution in Russia. The role of the Poles in history was one of "bold (hotheaded) foolishness". "And one cannot point to a single instance in which Poland has successfully represented progress, even in relation to Russia, or done anything at all of historical importance." Russia contains more of civilisation, education, industry and the bourgeoisie than "the Poland of the indolent gentry". "What are Warsaw and Cracow compared to St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa!" Engels had no faith in the success of the Polish gentry's insurrections.

But all these thoughts, showing the deep insight of genius, by no means prevented Engels and Marx from treating the Polish movement with the most profound and ardent sympathy twelve years later, when Russia was still dormant and Poland was seething.

When drafting the Address of the International in 1864, Marx wrote to Engels (on November 4, 1864) that he had to combat Mazzini's nationalism, and went on to say: "Inasmuch as international politics occurred in the Address, I spoke of countries, not of nationalities, and denounced Russia, not the *minores gentium.*" Marx had no doubt as to the subordinate position of the national question as compared with the "labour question". But his theory is as far from ignoring national movements as heaven is from earth.

Then came 1866. Marx wrote to Engels about the "Proudhonist clique" in Paris which "declares nationalities to be an absurdity, attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi. As polemics against chauvinism their doings are useful and explicable. But as believers in Proudhon (Lafargue and Longuet, two very good friends of mine here, also belong to them), who think all Europe must and will sit quietly on their hind quarters until the gentlemen in France abolish poverty and ignorance—they are grotesque." (Letter of June 7, 1866.)

"Yesterday," Marx wrote on June 20, 1866, "there was a discussion in the International Council on the present war.... The discussion wound up, as was to be foreseen, with 'the question of nationality' in general and the attitude we take towards it.... The representatives of 'Young France' (*non-workers*) came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices'. Proudhonised Stirnerism.... The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution.... The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue and others, who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, i.e., a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation."

The conclusion that follows from all these critical remarks of Marx's is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started, and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, that is, recognising "one's own nation" as a model nation (or, we would add, one possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).*

But let us return to the question of Ireland.

Marx's position on this question is most clearly expressed in the following extracts from his letters:

"I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the English workers in favour of Fenianism.... I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation." This is what Marx wrote to Engels on November 2, 1867.

In his letter of November 30 of the same year he added:

"...What shall we advise the *English* workers? In my opinion they must make the *Repeal of the Union*" [Ireland with England, i.e., the separation of Ireland from England] (in short, the affair of 1783, only democratised and adapted to the conditions of the time) an article of their *pronunziamento*. This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the programme of an *English* party. Experience must show later whether a mere personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries....

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* Cf. also Marx's letter to Engels of June 3, 1867: "...I have learned with real pleasure from the Paris letters to *The Times* about the pro-Polish exclamations of the Parisians against Russia.... Mr. Proudhon and his little doctrinaire clique are not the French people."

"...What the Irish need is:

"1) Self-government and independence from England;

"2) An agrarian revolution...."

Marx attached great importance to the Irish question and delivered hour-and-a-half lectures on this subject at the German Workers' Union (letter of December 17, 1867).

In a letter dated November 20, 1868, Engels spoke of "the hatred towards the Irish found among the English workers", and almost a year later (October 24, 1869), returning to this subject, he wrote:

"*Il n'y a qu'un pas* [it is only one step] from Ireland to Russia.... Irish history shows what a misfortune it is for one nation to have subjugated another. All the abominations of the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to plough my way through the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England, too, but for the necessity of military rule in Ireland and the creation of a new aristocracy there."

Let us note, in passing, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"The Polish workers in Posen have brought a strike to a victorious end with the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the lower form of the strike—is a more serious way of getting rid of national prejudices than peace declamations from the lips of bourgeois gentlemen."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx wrote to Engels that he had spoken for an hour and a quarter at the Council of the International on the question of the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish Amnesty, and had proposed the following resolution:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

"that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

"that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slaveholders' rebellion, he now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

"that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish Amnesty question are the true and genuine offspring of that '*policy of conquest*', by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

"that the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association express their admiration of the spirited, firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their Amnesty movement;

"that this resolution be communicated to all branches of, and workingmen's bodies connected with, the International Workingmen's Association in Europe and America."

On December 10, 1869, Marx wrote that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International would be couched as follows:

"Quite apart from all phrases about 'international' and 'humane' justice for Ireland—which are taken for granted in the International Council—*it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connexion with Ireland*. And this is my fullest conviction, and for reasons which in part I can *not* tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working-class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in the *New York Tribune* [an American paper to which Marx contributed for a long time]. Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* until it has got rid of Ireland.... The English reaction in England had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland." (Marx's italics.)

Marx's policy on the Irish question should now be quite clear to our readers.

Marx, the "utopian", was so "unpractical" that he stood for the separation of Ireland, which half a century later has not yet been achieved.

What gave rise to Marx's policy, and was it not mistaken?

At first Marx thought that Ireland would not be liberated by the national movement of the oppressed nation, but by the working-class movement of the oppressor nation. Marx did not make an Absolute of the national movement, knowing, as he did, that only the victory of the working class can bring about the complete liberation of all nationalities. It is impossible to estimate beforehand all the possible relations between the bourgeois liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressor nation (the very problem which today makes the national question in Russia so difficult).

However, it so happened that the English working class fell under the influence of the Liberals for a fairly long time, became an appendage to the Liberals, and by adopting a liberal-labour policy left itself leaderless. The bourgeois liberation movement in Ireland grew stronger and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx reconsidered his view and corrected it. "What a misfortune it is for a nation to have subjugated another." The English working class will never be free until Ireland is freed from the English yoke. Reaction in England is strengthened and fostered by the enslavement of Ireland (just as reaction in Russia is fostered by her enslavement of a number of nations!).

And, in proposing in the International a resolution of sympathy with "the Irish nation", "the Irish people" (the clever L. Vl. would probably have berated poor Marx for forgetting about the class struggle!), Marx advocated the *separation* of Ireland from England, "although after the separation there may come federation".

What were the theoretical grounds for Marx's conclusion? In England the bourgeois revolution had been consummated long ago. But it had not yet been consummated in Ireland; it is being consummated only now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the English Liberals. If capitalism had been overthrown in England as quickly as Marx had at first expected, there would have been no room for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it had arisen, Marx advised the English workers to support it, give it a revolutionary impetus and see it through in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and England in the 1860s were, of course, even closer than Russia's present ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "unpracticality" and "impracticability" of the separation of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and England's immense colonial power) were quite obvious. Though, in principle, an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance granted the possibility of federation, as well,* *if only* the emancipation of Ireland was achieved in a revolutionary, not reformist way, through a movement of the mass of the people of Ireland supported by the working class of England. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would have been in the best interests of the proletariat and most conducive to rapid social progress.

Things turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the English proletariat proved weak. Only now, through the sordid deals between the English Liberals and the Irish bourgeoisie, is the Irish problem *being solved* (the example of Ulster shows with what difficulty) through the land reform (with compensation) and Home Rule (not yet introduced). Well then? Does it follow that Marx and Engels were "utopians", that they put forward "impracticable" national demands, or that they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Irish petty-bourgeois nationalists (for there is no doubt about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Fenian movement), etc.?

No. In the Irish question, too, Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really educated the masses in a spirit of democracy and socialism. Only such a policy could have saved both Ireland and England half a century of delay in introducing the necessary reforms, and prevented these reforms from being mutilated by the Liberals to please the reactionaries.

The policy of Marx and Engels on the Irish question serves as a splendid example of the attitude the proletariat of the oppressor nations should adopt towards national movements, an example which has lost none of its immense *practical* importance. It serves as a warning against that "servile haste" with which the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to label as "utopian" the idea of altering the frontiers of states that were established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation.

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* By the way, it is not difficult to see why, from a Social-Democratic point of view, the right to "self-determination" means *neither* federation *nor* autonomy (although, speaking in the abstract, both come under the category of "self-determination"). The right to federation is simply meaningless, since federation implies a bilateral contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot include the defence of federalism in general in their programme. As far as autonomy is concerned, Marxists defend, not the "right" to autonomy, but autonomy *itself*, as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a mixed national composition, and a great variety of geographical and other conditions. Consequently, the recognition of the "right of nations to autonomy" is as absurd as that of the "right of nations to federation".

If the Irish and English proletariat had not accepted Marx's policy and had not made the secession of Ireland their slogan, this would have been the worst sort of opportunism, a neglect of their duties as democrats and socialists, and a concession to *English* reaction and the *English* bourgeoisie.

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Nos. 4, 5 and 6

Collected Works, Vol. 20,
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From UNDER A FALSE FLAG

III

The second epoch or, as Potresov puts it, "a span of forty-five years" (1870-1914), is characterised very inconclusively by him. The same incompleteness is the shortcoming in Trotsky's characterisation of the same period, given in his German work, although he does not agree with Potresov's practical conclusions (this, of course, standing to the former's credit). Both writers hardly realise the reason for their standing so close to each other, in a certain sense.

Here is what Potresov writes of this epoch, which we have called the second, that of yesterday:

> "A detailed restriction of work and the struggle and an all-pervading gradualism—these signs of the times, which by some have been elevated to a principle, have become to others an ordinary fact in their lives, and, as such, have become part of their mentality, a shade of their ideology" (p. 71). "Its [this epoch's] talent for a smooth and cautious advance had, as its reverse, firstly, a pronounced non-adaptability to any break in gradualness and to catastrophic phenomena of any kind and, secondly, an exceptional isolation within the sphere of national action—the national milieu..." (p. 72). "Neither revolution, nor war..." (p. 70). "Democracy became the more effectively national, the longer the period of its 'position warfare' was protracted and the longer there lingered on the stage that spell of European history which ...knew of no international conflicts in the heart of Europe, and consequently experienced no unrest extending beyond the boundaries of national state territories, and felt no keen interest on a general European or world scale" (75-76).

The chief shortcoming in this characterisation, as in Trotsky's characterisation of the same epoch, is a reluctance to discern and recognise the deep contradictions in modern democracy, which has developed on the foundation described above. The impression is produced that the democracy contemporary with the epoch under review remained a single whole, which, generally speaking, was pervaded with gradualism, turned national, was by degrees weaned away from breaks in gradualness and from catastrophes, and grew petty and mildewed.

In reality this could not have happened, since, side by side with the aforesaid tendencies, other and reverse tendencies were undoubtedly operating: the day-by-day life of the working masses was undergoing an internationalisation—the cities were attracting ever more inhabitants, and living conditions in the large cities of the whole world were being levelled out; capital was becoming internationalised, and at the big factories townsmen and countryfolk, both native and alien, were intermingling. The class contradictions were growing ever more acute; the employers' associations were exercising ever greater pressure on the workers' unions; sharper and more bitter forms of struggle were arising, as, for instance, mass strikes; the cost of living was rising; the pressure of finance capital was becoming intolerable, etc., etc.

In actual fact, events *did not follow* the pattern described by Potresov. This we know definitely. In the period under discussion, none, literally not one, of the leading capitalist countries of Europe was spared by the struggle between the two mutually opposed currents within contemporary democracy. In each of the big countries, this struggle at times assumed most violent forms, including splits, this despite the general "peaceful", "sluggish", and somnolent character of the epoch. These contradictory currents have affected all the various fields of life and all problems of modern democracy without exception, such as the attitude towards the bourgeoisie, alliances with the liberals, the voting for war credits, the attitude towards such matters as colonial policies, reforms, the character of economic struggle, the neutrality of the trade unions, etc.

"All-pervading gradualism" was in no way the predominant sentiment in all contemporary democracy, as the writings of Potresov and Trotsky imply. No, this gradualism was taking shape as a definite political trend, which at the time often produced individual groups, and sometimes even individual parties, of modern democracy in Europe.

That trend had its own leaders, its press organs, its policy, and its own particular—and specially organised—method of influencing the masses of the population. Moreover, this trend was more and more basing itself—and ultimately based itself solidly—on the interests of a definite social stratum *within* the democracy of the time.

"All-pervading gradualism" naturally attracted into the ranks of that democracy a number of petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers; furthermore, the specifically petty-bourgeois conditions, and consequently, a petty-bourgeois political orientation, became the rule with a definite stratum of parliamentarians, journalists, and trade union officials; a kind of bureaucracy and aristocracy of the working class was arising in a manner more or less pronounced and clear-cut.

Take, for instance, the possession of colonies and the expansion of colonial possessions. These were undoubted features of the period dealt with above, and of the majority of big states. What did that mean in the economic sense? It meant a sum of super-profits and special privileges for the bourgeoisie. It meant, moreover, the possibility of enjoying crumbs from this big cake for a small minority of the petty bourgeois, as well as for the better-placed employees, officials of the labour movement, etc. The enjoyment of crumbs of advantage from the colonies, from privileges, by an insignificant minority of the working class in Britain, for instance, is an established fact, recognised and pointed out by Marx and Engels. Formerly confined to Britain alone, this phenomenon became common to all the great capitalist countries of Europe, as their colonial possessions expanded, and in general as the imperialist period of capitalism grew and developed.

In a word, the "all-pervading gradualism" of the second epoch (the one of yesterday) has created, not only a certain "non-adaptability to any break in gradualness", as Potresov thinks, not only certain "possibilist" tendencies, as Trotsky supposes, but an entire opportunist *trend* based on a definite social stratum within present-day democracy, and linked with the bourgeoisie of its own national "shade" by numerous ties of common economic, social, and political interests—a trend directly, openly, consciously, and systematically hostile to any idea of a "break in gradualness".

A number of Trotsky's tactical and organisational errors (to say nothing of Potresov's) spring from his fear, or his reluctance, or inability to recognise the fact of the "maturity" achieved by the opportunist trend, and also its intimate and unbreakable link with the national-liberals (or social-nationalists) of our times. In practice, this failure to recognise this "maturity" and this unbreakable link leads, at least, to absolute confusion and helplessness in the face of the predominant social-nationalist (or national-liberal) evil.

The link between opportunism and social-nationalism is, generally speaking, denied by Potresov, by Martov, Axelrod, V. Kosovsky (who has talked himself into defending the German democrats' national-liberal vote for war credits) and by Trotsky.

Their main "argument" is that no full coincidence exists between yesterday's division of democracy "along the line of opportunism" and today's division "along the line of social-nationalism". This argument is, firstly, incorrect in point of fact, as we shall presently show; secondly, it is absolutely one-sided, incomplete and untenable from the standpoint of Marxist principles. Persons and groups may shift from one side to the other; that is not only possible, but even inevitable in any great social upheaval; however, it does not at all affect the nature of a definite *trend*, or the ideological links between definite trends, or their *class* significance. All these considerations might seem so generally known and indisputable that one feels almost embarrassed at having to lay such emphasis on them. Yet the above-mentioned writers have lost sight of these very considerations. The fundamental class significance of opportunism—or, in other words, its social-economic content—lies in certain elements of present-day democracy having gone over (in fact, though perhaps unconsciously) to the bourgeoisie, on a number of individual issues. Opportunism is tantamount to a liberal-labour policy. Anyone who is fearful of the "factional" look of these words would do well to go to the trouble of studying the opinions of Marx, Engels, and Kautsky (is the latter not an "authority" highly suitable to the opponents of "factionalism"?) on, let us say, British opportunism. There cannot be the slightest doubt that such a study would lead to a recognition of the coincidence of fundamentals between opportunism and a liberal-labour policy. The basic class significance of today's social-nationalism is exactly the same. The fundamental *idea* of opportunism is an alliance or a drawing together (sometimes an agreement, bloc, or the like) between the bourgeoisie and its antipode. The fundamental idea of social-nationalism is exactly the same. The ideological and political affinity, connection, and even identity between opportunism and social-nationalism are beyond doubt. Naturally, we must take as our basis, not individuals or groups, but a *class* analysis of the content of social *trends*, and an ideological and political examination of their essential and main principles.

Approaching the same subject from a somewhat different angle, we shall ask: *whence* did social-nationalism appear? How did it grow and mature? *What* gave it significance and strength? He who has been unable to find answers to these questions has completely failed to understand what social-nationalism is, and is consequently quite incapable of drawing an "ideological line" between himself and social-nationalism, no matter how vehemently he may assert that he is ready to do so.

There can be only one answer to this question: social-nationalism has developed from opportunism, and it was the latter that gave it strength. How could social-nationalism have appeared "all of a sudden"? In the same fashion as a babe appears "all of a sudden" if nine months have elapsed since its conception. Each of the numerous manifestations of opportunism during the entire second (or yesterday) epoch in all the European countries was a rivulet, which now flowed "all of a sudden" into a big though very shallow (and, we might add parenthetically, muddy and dirty) river of social-nationalism. Nine months after conception the babe must separate from its mother; many decades after opportunism was conceived, social-nationalism, its ripe fruit, will have to separate from present-day democracy within a period that is more or less brief (as compared with decades). No matter how good people may scold, rage or vociferate over such ideas and words, this is inevitable, since it follows from the entire social development of present-day democracy and from the objective conditions in the third epoch.

But if division "along the line of opportunism" and division "along the line of social-nationalism" do not fully coincide, does that not prove that no substantial link exists between these two facts? It does not, in the first place, just as the fact that individual bourgeois at the end of the eighteenth century went over either to the side of the feudal lords or that of the people does not prove that there was "no link" between the growth of the bourgeoisie and the Great French Revolution of 1789. Secondly, taken by and large, there *is* such a coincidence (and we are speaking only in a general sense and of movements as a whole). Take, not one individual country but a number of them, let us say ten European countries: Germany, *Britain*, *France*, *Belgium*, Russia, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Holland and Bulgaria. Only the three countries given in italics may seem the exceptions. In the others, the *trends* of uncompromising antagonists to opportunism have given birth to *trends* hostile to social-nationalism. Compare the well-known *Monatshefte*[74] and its opponents in Germany, *Nashe Dyelo*[75] and its opponents in Russia, the party of Bissolati and its opponents in Italy, the adherents of Greulich and Grimm in Switzerland, Branting and Höglund in Sweden, and Troelstra, Pannekoek and Gorter in Holland, and finally the *Obshcho Dyelo* adherents and the *Tesnyaki*[76] in Bulgaria. The general coincidence between the old and the new division is a fact; as for complete coincidences, they do not occur even in the simplest of natural phenomena, any more than there is complete coincidence between the Volga before the Kama joins it, and the Volga below that point; neither is there full similarity between a child and its parents. Britain only seems the exception; in reality, there were two main currents in Britain prior to the war, these being identified with two *dailies*—which is the truest objective indication of the mass character of these currents—namely, the *Daily Citizen*, the opportunists' newspaper, and the *Daily Herald*, the organ of the opponents of opportunism. Both papers have been swamped by the wave of nationalism; yet, opposition has been expressed by under one-tenth of the former's adherents and by some three-sevenths of the adherents of the latter.[77] The usual method of comparison, whereby only the British Socialist Party is compared with the Independent Labour Party, is erroneous because it overlooks the existence of an *actual* bloc of the latter with the Fabians and the Labour Party. It follows, then, that only two out of the ten countries are exceptions, but even here the exceptions are not complete, since the trends have not changed places; only (for reasons so obvious that they need not be dwelt on) the wave has swamped almost all the opponents of opportunism. This undoubtedly proves the strength of the wave, but it does not in any way disprove coincidence between the old division and the new for all Europe.

We are told that division "along the line of opportunism" is outmoded, and that only one division is of significance, namely, that between the adherents of internationalism and the adherents of national self-sufficiency. This opinion is fundamentally wrong. The concept of "adherents of internationalism" is devoid of all content and meaning, if we do not *concretely* amplify it; any step towards such concrete amplification, however, will be an enumeration of features of hostility to opportunism. In practice, this will prove truer still. An adherent of internationalism who is not at the same time a most consistent and determined adversary of opportunism is a phantom, nothing more. Perhaps certain individuals of this type will honestly consider themselves "internationalists". However, people are judged, not by what they think of themselves but by their political behaviour. The political behaviour of "internationalists" who are not consistent and determined adversaries of opportunism will always aid and abet the nationalist trend. On the other hand, nationalists, too, call themselves "internationalists" (Kautsky, Lensch, Haenisch, Vandervelde, Hyndman, and others); not only do they call themselves so, but they fully acknowledge an international *rapprochement*, an agreement, a union of persons sharing their views. The opportunists *are not against* "internationalism"; they are only in favour of international approval for and international agreement among the opportunists.

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Collected Works, Vol. 21,
pp. 150-57

ON THE LONDON CONFERENCE[78]

The declaration by Comrade Maximovich,[79] representative of the R.S.D.L.P.'s Central Committee, which we are publishing here, fully expresses our Party's views on this Conference. The French bourgeois press has excellently revealed its significance as an expedient or a stratagem of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie. The roles have been distributed as follows: *Le Temps* and *L'Écho de Paris* have attacked the French socialists for their allegedly excessive concessions to internationalism. These attacks have been merely a stratagem designed to pave the way for Premier Viviani's well-known declaration in the Chamber, which was marked by an aggressive patriotism. On the other hand, *Journal des Débats* laid the cards on the table by stating that the whole point was in getting the British socialists, under Keir Hardie, who had hitherto been opposed to the war and to conscription, to vote, at the Conference, for the war to be prosecuted until victory is won over Germany. This is tangible and important as the political outcome of the British and French socialists having been won over to the side of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie. As for the phrases on internationalism, socialism, a referendum, etc., these are *merely* phrases, idle words of no significance whatever.

No doubt, the clever reactionaries of the French bourgeoisie have blurted out the real truth. The war is being conducted by the Anglo-French bourgeoisie, plus their Russian counterpart, with the aim of ravaging and plundering Germany, Austria and Turkey. It stands in need of recruiting officers, as well as of socialist consent to fight on until victory over Germany is won. The rest is idle and shameful phrasemongering, which prostitutes such great words as socialism, internationalism, etc. To follow the bourgeoisie and help it plunder other countries in deed, and to regale the masses with hypocritical recognition of "socialism and the International" in word—such is opportunism's cardinal sin and the main reason why the Second International has collapsed.

The task confronting the opponents of social-chauvinism at the London Conference was therefore clear: in the name of clear-cut anti-chauvinist principles, they had to walk out from the Conference, *without* at the same time *falling into* Germanophilism, since, for no other motive but *chauvinism*, the pro-Germans are decidedly opposed to the London Conference. Comrade Maximovich accomplished that task when he spoke in definite terms of the *treachery* of the German socialists.

The Bundists and the adherents of the Organising Committee[80] are unable to grasp this simple and obvious fact. The former are Germanophiles, in the way Kosovsky is, who *frankly justifies* the German Social-Democrats' vote for war credits (see *Information Bulletin* of the Bund No. 7, January 1915, p. 7, beginning of §5). The editors of the bulletin made no mention of their disagreeing with Kosovsky, although they did emphasise that they were in disagreement with Borisov, that champion of Russian patriotism. The Manifesto of the Bund's Central Committee (ibid., p. 3) does not contain a single explicit word against social-chauvinism.

The Organising Committee's supporters want a reconciliation between the Germanophile and the Francophile brands of chauvinism as can be seen from Axelrod's statements (*Golos* Nos. 86 and 87 and from the first issue of *Izvestia* of the Organising Committee's secretariat abroad. Feb. 22, 1915). When the editors of *Nashe Slovo*[81] proposed that we take joint action against "official social-chauvinism", we replied *outright* that the Organising Committee and the Bund had themselves sided with official social-patriotism. In our reply we enclosed our draft declaration and referred to Comrade Maximovich's decisive vote.

Why is *Nashe Slovo* trying to deceive itself and others in *failing to mention* this in its editorial of No. 32? Why is it silent about our declaration having also spoken of the German

Social-Democrats' *treachery*? The *Nashe Slovo* declaration *omitted* this most important and fundamental point: neither we nor Comrade Maximovich adopted that declaration, or could have done so. That was why joint action by the Organising Committee and ourselves did *not* result. Why, then, is *Nashe Slovo* deceiving itself and others in asserting that a basis exists for unity of action?

"Official social-patriotism" is the main evil in present-day socialism. To combat that evil (and not to become reconciled to it, or to declare a mutual international "amnesty" on this point), all forces must be prepared and mustered. Kautsky and others have produced a clear-cut programme for an "amnesty" and a peace with social-chauvinism. We have tried to give a clear-cut programme for the struggle against it: see, in particular, No. 33 of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and the resolutions published therein. It remains for us to express the wish that *Nashe Slovo* go over to something more definite than vacillation between "platonic sympathy with internationalism", and peace with social-chauvinism.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 40,
March 29, 1915

Collected Works, Vol. 21,
pp. 178-80

THE SLOGAN OF CIVIL WAR ILLUSTRATED

On January 8 (New Style), Swiss papers received the following message from Berlin:

> "Of late the press has repeatedly carried reports of peaceable attempts made by men in the German and French trenches to enter into friendly relations. According to *Tägliche Rundschau*, an army order dated December 29 bans any fraternisation and any kind of intercourse with the enemy in the trenches. Disregard of this order is punishable as high treason."

Thus, fraternisation and attempts to enter into friendly relations with the enemy are a fact. The German military authorities are showing concern over the matter, which means that they attach considerable importance to it. The British *Labour Leader* of January 7, 1915, published a *series* of quotations from the British bourgeois press on instances of fraternisation between British and German soldiers, who arranged a "forty-eight-hour truce" at Christmas, met amicably in no-man's land, and so on. The British military authorities issued a *special order forbidding* fraternisation. And yet, with the utmost complacency and the comfortable feeling that the military censorship will protect them against any denials, the socialist opportunists and their vindicators (or lackeys?) have assured the workers, through the press (as Kautsky has done), that *no* understanding on anti-war action by the socialists of the belligerent countries is possible (the expression literally used by Kautsky in *Die Neue Zeit*)!

Try to imagine Hyndman, Guesde, Vandervelde, Plekhanov, Kautsky and the rest—instead of aiding the bourgeoisie (something they are now engaged in)—forming an international committee to agitate for "fraternisation and attempts to establish friendly relations" between the socialists of the belligerent countries, both in the "trenches" and among the troops in general. What would the results be several months from now, if today, only six months after the outbreak of the war and *despite* all the political bosses, leaders and luminaries who have betrayed socialism, opposition is mounting on all sides against those who have voted for war credits and those who have accepted ministerial jobs, and the military authorities are threatening that "fraternisation" carries the death sentence?

"There is only one practical issue—victory or defeat for one's country", Kautsky, lackey of the opportunists, has written, in concord with Guesde, Plekhanov and Co. Indeed, if one were to forget socialism and the class struggle, that would be the truth. However, if one does not lose sight of socialism, that is untrue. Then there is another *practical* issue: should we perish as blind and helpless slaves, in a war between slave-holders, or should we fall in "attempts at fraternisation" between the slaves, with the aim of casting off slavery?

Such, *in reality*, is the "practical" issue.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 40,
March 29, 1915

Collected Works, Vol. 21,
pp. 181-82

BOURGEOIS PHILANTHROPISTS AND REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

The Economist, a journal that speaks for the British millionaires, is pursuing a very instructive line in relation to the war. Representatives of advanced capital in the oldest and richest capitalist country are shedding tears over the war and incessantly voicing a wish for peace. Those Social-Democrats who, together with the opportunists and Kautsky, think that a socialist programme consists in the propaganda of peace, will find proof of their error if they read *The Economist*. Their programme is not socialist, but bourgeois-pacifist. Dreams of peace, without propaganda of revolutionary action, express only a horror of war, but have nothing in common with socialism.

Moreover, *The Economist* stands for peace just because it is afraid of revolution. For instance, its issue for February 13, 1915, contains the following passage:

> "Philanthropists profess to hope that the peace settlement will bring with it a great international reduction of armies.... But those who know the forces which really control the diplomacy of Europe see no Utopias. The outlook is for bloody revolutions and fierce wars between labour and capital, or between the masses and the governing classes of Continental Europe...."

In the issue of March 27, 1915, we again find expression of a desire for a peace that will guarantee freedom of nationalities, etc., as promised by Sir Edward Grey. If this hope is not realised, the paper says, the war "will end in revolutionary chaos, beginning no one can say where, and ending in no one can say what".

The British pacifist millionaires have a better understanding of present-day politics than the opportunists, the followers of Kautsky and similar socialist whimperers after peace. The bourgeois know, first, that phrases about a democratic peace are an idle and foolish Utopia while the old "forces ... really control the diplomacy", i.e., until the class of capitalists has been expropriated. Secondly, the bourgeoisie have made a sober appraisal of the outlook, foreseeing "bloody revolutions" and "revolutionary chaos". To the bourgeoisie a socialist revolution always seems "revolutionary chaos".

In the realistic politics of the capitalist countries, three kinds of peace sympathies can be seen:

(1) The more enlightened millionaires wish an early peace because they are afraid of revolutions. They have soberly and correctly described any "democratic" peace (without annexations, but with limited armaments, etc.) as Utopian under capitalism.

This philistine Utopia is being advocated by the opportunists, the adherents of Kautsky, and the like.

(2) The unenlightened masses of the people (the petty bourgeois, semi-proletarians, part of the workers, etc.), whose desire for peace is very vague, are thereby expressing a growing protest against the war and a growing but as yet vague revolutionary sentiment.

(3) The revolutionary Social-Democrats, the enlightened advance guard of the proletariat, are attentively studying the sentiments of the masses, utilising the latter's growing striving for peace, not in order to bolster the vulgar utopias of a "democratic" peace under capitalism, not in order to encourage hopes being placed in the philanthropists, the authorities, and the bourgeoisie, but to bring clarity into vague revolutionary sentiments, to enlighten the masses with a thousand facts of pre-war politics; basing that work on the experience of the masses and on their sentiments, they are out to *prove* systematically, steadfastly and unswervingly the need for mass revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie and the governments of their respective countries as the *only* road towards democracy and socialism.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 41,
May 1, 1915

Collected Works, Vol. 21,
pp. 192-93

From THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

Only yesterday, one might say, when, before the war, Hyndman turned towards a defence of imperialism, all "respectable" socialists considered him an unbalanced crank, of whom nobody spoke otherwise than in a tone of disdain. Today the most prominent Social-Democratic leaders of all countries have sunk entirely to Hyndman's position, differing from one another only in shades of opinion and in temperament. We are quite unable to find some more or less suitable parliamentary expression in appraising or characterising the civic courage of such persons as, for instance, the *Nashe Slovo* authors, who write of "Mr." Hyndman with contempt, while speaking—or saying nothing—of "Comrade" Kautsky with deference (or obsequiousness?). Can such an attitude be reconciled with a respect for socialism, and for one's convictions in general? If you are convinced that Hyndman's chauvinism is false and destructive, does it not follow that you should direct your criticism and attacks against Kautsky, the *more influential* and more dangerous defender of such views?

IV

The most subtle theory of social-chauvinism, one that has been most skilfully touched up to look scientific and international, is the theory of "ultra-imperialism" advanced by Kautsky. Here is the clearest, most precise and most recent exposition of this theory in the words of the author himself:

"The subsiding of the Protectionist movement in Britain; the lowering of tariffs in America; the trend towards disarmament; the rapid decline in the export of capital from France and Germany in the years immediately preceding the war; finally, the growing international interweaving between the various cliques of finance capital—all this has caused me to consider whether the present imperialist policy cannot be supplanted by a new, ultra-imperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capital. Such a new phase of capitalism is at any rate conceivable. Can it be achieved? Sufficient premises are still lacking to enable us to answer this question..." (*Die Neue Zeit* No. 5, April 30, 1915, p. 144).

"The course and the outcome of the present war may prove decisive in this respect. It may entirely crush the weak beginnings of ultra-imperialism by fanning to the highest degree national hatred also among the finance capitalists, by intensifying the armaments race, and by making a second world war inevitable. Under such conditions, the thing I foresaw and formulated in my pamphlet, *The Road to Power*, would come true in horrifying dimensions; class antagonisms would become sharper and sharper and with it would come the moral decay [literally: "going out of business, *Abwirtschaftung*", bankruptcy] of capitalism.... [It must be noted that by this pretentious word Kautsky means simply the "hatred" which the "strata intermediary between the proletariat and finance capital", namely, "the intelligentsia, the petty bourgeois, even small capitalists", feel towards capitalism.] But the war may end otherwise. It may lead to the strengthening of the weak beginnings of ultra-imperialism.... Its lessons [note this!] may hasten developments for which we would have to wait a long time under peace conditions. If it does lead to this, to an agreement between nations, disarmament and a lasting peace, then the worst of the causes that led to the growing moral decay of capitalism before the war may disappear". The new phase will, of course, bring the proletariat "new misfortunes", "perhaps even worse", but "for a time", "ultra-imperialism" "could create an era of new hopes and expectations within the framework of capitalism" (p. 145).

How is a justification of social-chauvinism deduced from this "theory"?

In a way rather strange for a "theoretician", namely as follows:

The Left-wing Social-Democrats in Germany say that imperialism and the wars it engenders are not accidental, but an inevitable product of capitalism, which has brought about the domination of finance capital. It is therefore necessary to go over to the revolutionary mass struggle, as the period of comparatively peaceful development has ended. The "Right"-wing Social-Democrats brazenly declare: since imperialism is "necessary", we too must be imperialists. Kautsky, in the role of the "Centre", tries to reconcile these two views.

> "The extreme Lefts," he writes in his pamphlet, *The National State, the Imperialist State and the League of States* (Nuremberg, 1915), wish to "contrapose" socialism to inevitable imperialism, i.e., "not only the propaganda for socialism that we have been carrying on for half a century in contraposition to all forms of capitalist domination, but the immediate achievement of socialism. This seems very radical, but it can only serve *to drive* into the camp of imperialism *anyone* who *does not believe* in the immediate practical achievement of socialism" (p. 17, italics ours).

When he speaks of the immediate achievement of socialism, Kautsky is resorting to a subterfuge, for he takes advantage of the fact that in Germany, especially under the military censorship, revolutionary action cannot be spoken of. Kautsky is well aware that the Left wing is demanding of the Party *immediate* propaganda in favour of and preparation for, revolutionary action, not the "immediate practical achievement of socialism".

From the necessity of imperialism the Left wing deduces the necessity of revolutionary action. The "theory of ultra-imperialism", however, serves Kautsky as a means *to justify the opportunists*, to present the situation in such a light as to create the impression that they have not gone over to the bourgeoisie but simply "do not believe" that socialism can arrive immediately, and expect that a new "era" of disarmament and lasting peace "may be" ushered in. This "theory" boils down, and can *only* boil down, to the following: Kautsky is exploiting the *hope* for a *new* peaceful era of capitalism so as to justify the adhesion of the opportunists and the official Social-Democratic parties to the bourgeoisie, and their rejection of revolutionary, i.e., proletarian, tactics in the *present stormy era*, this despite the solemn declarations of the Basle resolution!

At the same time Kautsky does not say that this new phase follows, and necessarily so, from certain definite circumstances and conditions. On the contrary, he states quite outspokenly that he cannot yet even decide whether or not this new phase is "*achievable*". Indeed, consider the "trends" towards the new era, which have been indicated by Kautsky. Astonishingly enough, the author has included among the economic facts "the trend towards disarmament"! This means that, behind innocent philistine talk and pipedreaming, Kautsky is trying to hide from indisputable facts that do not at all fit in with the theory of the mitigation of contradictions. Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism"—this term, incidentally, does not at all express what the author wants to say—implies a tremendous *mitigation* of the contradictions of capitalism. We are told that Protectionism is subsiding in Britain and America. But where is there the least trend towards a new era? Extreme Protectionism is now subsiding in America, but Protectionism remains, just as the privileges, the preferential tariffs favouring Britain, have remained in that country's colonies. Let us recall what the passage from the previous and "peaceful" period of capitalism to the present and imperialist period has been based on: free competition has yielded to monopolist capitalist combines, and the world has been partitioned. Both these facts (and factors) are obviously of world-wide significance: Free Trade and peaceful competition were possible and necessary as long as capital was in a position to enlarge its colonies without hindrance, and seize unoccupied land in Africa, etc., and as long as the concentration of capital was still weak and no monopolist concerns existed, i.e., concerns of a magnitude permitting domination in an *entire* branch of industry. The appearance and growth of such monopolist concerns (has this process been stopped in Britain or America? Not even Kautsky will dare deny that the war has accelerated and intensified it) have rendered the free competition of former times *impossible*; they have cut the ground from under its feet, while the partition of the world *compels* the capitalists to go over from peaceful expansion to an armed struggle for the *repartitioning* of colonies and spheres of influence. It is ridiculous to think that the *subsiding* of Protectionism in two countries can change anything in this respect.

Let us further examine the fall in capital exports from *two* countries in the course of a few years. In 1912 these two countries, France and Germany, each had about 35,000 million marks (about 17,000 million rubles) of foreign investments, this according to Harms's statistics, while Britain alone had twice that sum.* The increase in exports of capital has never proceeded evenly under capitalism, nor could that have been so. Kautsky dares not even suggest that the accumulation of capital has decreased, or that the capacity of the home market has undergone any important change, say through a big improvement in the conditions of the masses. In these circumstances, the fall in capital exports from two countries over several years cannot imply the advent of a new era.

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* See Bernhard Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft*, Jena, 1912; George Paish, "Great Britain's Capital Investments in the Colonies, etc." in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910/11, p. 167. Lloyd George, in a speech early in 1915, estimated British capital invested abroad at £4,000,000,000, i.e., about 80,000,000,000 marks.

"The growing international interweaving between the cliques of finance capital" is the only really general and indubitable tendency, not during the last few years and in two countries, but throughout the whole capitalist world. But why should this trend engender a striving towards disarmament, not armaments, as hitherto? Take any one of the world-famous cannon (and arms) manufacturers, Armstrong, for instance. The British *Economist* (May 1, 1915) published figures showing that this firm's *profits* rose from £606,000 (about 6,000,000 rubles) in 1905/6 to £856,000 in 1913, and to 940,000 (*9,000,000 rubles*) in 1914. Here, the intertwining of finance capital is most pronounced, and is on the increase; German capitalists have "holdings" in British firms; British firms build submarines for Austria, and so on. Interlinked on a world-wide scale, capital is thriving on armaments and wars. To think that the fact of capital in the individual states combining and interlinking on an international scale must of necessity produce an economic trend towards disarmament means, in effect, allowing well-meaning philistine expectations of an easing of class contradictions take the place of the actual intensification of those contradictions.

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BRITISH PACIFISM AND THE BRITISH DISLIKE OF THEORY

Political freedom has hitherto been far more extensive in Britain than elsewhere in Europe. Here, more than anywhere else, the bourgeoisie are used to governing and know how to govern. The relations between the classes are more developed and in many respects clearer than in other countries. The absence of conscription gives the people more liberty in their attitude towards the war *in the sense* that anyone may refuse to join the colours, which is why the government (which in Britain is a committee, in its purest form, for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie) are compelled to bend every effort to rouse "popular" enthusiasm for the war. That aim could never be attained without a radical change in the laws, had the mass of proletarians not been completely disorganised and demoralised by the desertion to a Liberal, i.e., bourgeois, policy of a minority of the best placed, skilled and unionised workers. The British trade unions comprise about one-fifth of all wage workers. Most trade union leaders are Liberals; Marx long ago called them agents of the bourgeoisie.

All these features of Britain help us, on the one hand, better to understand the essence of present-day social-chauvinism, that essence being *identical* in autocratic and democratic countries, in militarist and conscription-free countries; on the other hand, they help us to appreciate, on the basis of facts, the significance of that compromise with social-chauvinism which is expressed, for instance, in the extolling of the slogan of peace, etc.

The Fabian Society is undoubtedly the most consummate expression of opportunism and of Liberal-Labour policy.

The reader should look into the correspondence of Marx and Engels with Sorge (two Russian translations of which have appeared). There he will find an excellent characterisation of that society given by Engels, who treats Messrs. Sidney Webb & Co. as a gang of bourgeois rogues who would demoralise the workers, influence them in a counter-revolutionary spirit. One may vouch for the fact that no Second International leader with any responsibility and influence has ever attempted to refute this estimation of Engels's, or even to doubt its correctness.

Let us now compare the *facts*, leaving *theory* aside for a moment. You will see that the Fabians' *behaviour* during the war (see, for instance, their weekly paper, *The New Statesman*), and that of the German Social-Democratic Party, including Kautsky, are *identical*. The same direct and indirect defence of social-chauvinism; the same combination of that defence with a readiness to utter all sorts of kindly, humane and near-Left phrases about peace, disarmament, etc., etc.

The fact stands, and the conclusion to be drawn—however unpleasant it may be to various persons—is inescapably and undoubtedly the following: in practice the leaders of the present-day German Social-Democratic Party, including Kautsky, are exactly the same kind of agents of the bourgeoisie that Engels called the Fabians long ago. The Fabians' non-recognition of Marxism and its "recognition" by Kautsky and Co. make no difference whatever in the essentials, in the facts of politics; the only thing proved is that some writers, politicians, etc., have converted Marxism into Struvism.[82] Their hypocrisy is *not* a private vice with them; in individual cases they may be highly virtuous heads of families; their hypocrisy is the result of the objective falseness of their social status: they are supposed to represent the revolutionary proletariat, whereas they are actually agents charged with the business of inculcating bourgeois, chauvinist ideas in the proletariat.

The Fabians are more sincere and honest than Kautsky and Co., because they have not promised to stand for revolution; politically, however, they are of the *same* kidney.

The long history of Britain's political freedom and the developed condition of her political life in general, and of her bourgeoisie in particular, have resulted in various *shades* of bourgeois opinion being able to find rapid, free and open expression in that country's new political organisations. One such organisation is the Union of Democratic Control, whose secretary and treasurer is E. D. Morel, now a regular contributor to *The Labour Leader*, the Independent Labour Party's central organ. This individual was for several years the Liberal Party's nominee for the Birkenhead constituency. When Morel came out *against* the war, shortly after its outbreak, the committee of the Birkenhead Liberal Association notified him, in a letter dated October 2, 1914, that his candidature would no longer be acceptable, i.e., he was simply expelled from the Party. Morel replied to this in a letter of October 14, which he subsequently published as a pamphlet entitled *The Outbreak of the War*. Like a number of other articles by Morel, the pamphlet exposes *his* government, proving the falseness of assertions that the rape of Belgium's neutrality caused the war, or that the war is aimed at the destruction of *Prussian* imperialism, etc., etc. Morel defends the programme of the Union of Democratic Control—peace, disarmament, all territories to have the right of self-determination by plebiscite, and the democratic control of foreign policy.

All this shows that as an individual, Morel undoubtedly deserves credit for his sincere sympathy with democracy, for turning away from the jingoist bourgeoisie to the pacifist bourgeoisie. When Morel cites the facts to prove that *his* government duped the people when it denied the existence of secret treaties although such treaties actually existed; that the British bourgeoisie, as early as 1887, fully realised that Belgium's neutrality would inevitably be violated in the event of a Franco-German war, and emphatically rejected the idea of interfering (Germany not yet being a dangerous competitor!); that in a number of books published before the war French militarists such as Colonel Boucher quite openly acknowledged the existence of plans for an *aggressive* war by France and Russia against Germany; that the well-known British military authority, Colonel Repington, admitted *in 1911* in the press, that the growth of Russian armaments after 1905 had been a threat to Germany—when Morel reveals all this, we cannot but admit that we are dealing with an exceptionally honest and courageous bourgeois, who is not afraid to break with his own party.

Yet anyone will at once concede that, after all, Morel is a bourgeois, whose talk about peace and disarmament is a lot of empty phrases, since without revolutionary action by the proletariat there can be neither a democratic peace nor disarmament. Though he has broken with the Liberals on the question of the present war, Morel remains a Liberal on all other economic and political issues. Why is it, then, that when Kautsky, in Germany, gives a Marxist guise to the *selfsame bourgeois phrases* about peace and disarmament, this is not considered hypocrisy on his part, but stands to his merit? Only the undeveloped character of political relations and the absence of political freedom prevent the formation in Germany, as rapidly and smoothly as in Britain, of a bourgeois league for peace and disarmament, with Kautsky's programme.

Let us, then, admit the truth that Kautsky's stand is that of a pacifist bourgeois, not of a revolutionary Social-Democrat.

The events we are living amidst are great enough for us to be courageous in recognising the truth, no matter whom it may concern.

With their dislike of abstract theory and their pride in their practicality, the British often pose political issues *more directly*, thus helping the socialists of other countries to discover the actual content *beneath* the husk of wording of every kind (including the "Marxist"). Instructive in this respect is the pamphlet *Socialism and War*,* published before the war by the jingoist paper, *The Clarion*. The pamphlet contains an anti-war "manifesto" by Upton Sinclair, the U.S. socialist, and also a reply to him from the jingoist Robert Blatchford, who has long adopted Hyndman's imperialist viewpoint.

Sinclair is a socialist of the emotions, without any theoretical training. He states the issue in "simple" fashion; incensed by the approach of war, he seeks salvation from it in socialism.

> "We are told," Sinclair writes, "that the socialist movement is yet too weak so that we must wait for its evolution. But evolution is working in the hearts of men; we are its instruments, and if we do not struggle, there is no evolution. We are told that the movement [against war] would be crushed out; but I declare my faith that the crushing out of any rebellion which sought, from motive of sublime humanity,

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* *Socialism and War*. The Clarion Press, 44 Worship Street, London, E.C.

> to prevent war, would be the greatest victory that socialism has ever gained—would shake the conscience of civilisation and rouse the workers of the world as nothing in all history has yet done. Let us not be too fearful for our movement, nor put too much stress upon numbers and the outward appearances of power. A thousand men aglow with faith and determination are stronger than a million grown cautious and respectable; and there is no danger to the socialist movement so great as the danger of becoming an established institution."

This, as can be seen, is a naïve, theoretically unreasoned, but profoundly correct warning against any vulgarising of socialism, and a call to revolutionary struggle.

What does Blatchford say in reply to Sinclair?

"It is capitalists and militarists who make wars. That is true...." he says. Blatchford is as anxious for peace and for socialism taking the place of capitalism as any socialist in the world. But Sinclair will not convince him, or do away with the facts with "rhetoric and fine phrases". "Facts, my dear Sinclair, are obstinate things, and the German danger is a fact". Neither the British nor the German socialists are strong enough to prevent war, and "Sinclair greatly exaggerates the power of British socialism. The British socialists... are not united; they have no money, no arms, no discipline". The only thing they can do is *to help* the British Government build up the navy; there is not, nor can there be, any other guarantee of peace.

Neither before nor since the outbreak of the war have the chauvinists ever been so outspoken in Continental Europe. In Germany it is not frankness that is prevalent, but Kautsky's hypocrisy and playing at sophistry. The same is true of Plekhanov. That is why it is so instructive to cast a glance at the situation in a more advanced country, where nobody will be taken in with sophisms or a travesty of Marxism. Here issues are stated in a more straightforward and truthful manner. Let us learn from the "advanced" British.

Sinclair is naïve in his appeal, although fundamentally it is a very correct one; he is naïve because he ignores the development of mass socialism over the last fifty years and the struggle of trends within socialism; he ignores the conditions for the growth of revolutionary action when an objectively revolutionary situation and a revolutionary organisation exist. The "emotional" approach cannot make up for that. The intense and bitter struggle between powerful trends in socialism, between the opportunist and revolutionary trends, cannot be evaded by the use of rhetoric.

Blatchford speaks out undisguisedly, revealing the most covert argument of the Kautskyites and Co., who are afraid to tell the truth. We are still weak, that is all, says Blatchford; but his outspokenness at once lays bare his opportunism, his jingoism. It at once becomes obvious that he serves the bourgeoisie and the opportunists. By declaring that socialism is "*weak*" he *himself weakens* it by preaching an anti-socialist, bourgeois, policy.

Like Sinclair, but conversely, like a coward and not like a fighter, like a traitor and not like the recklessly brave, he, too, ignores the conditions making for a revolutionary situation.

As for his practical conclusions, his policy (the rejection of revolutionary action, of propaganda for such action and preparation of it), Blatchford, the vulgar jingoist, is in *complete* accord with Plekhanov and Kautsky.

Marxist words have in our days become a cover for a total renunciation of Marxism; to be a Marxist, one must expose the "Marxist hypocrisy" of the leaders of the Second International, fearlessly recognise the struggle of the two trends in socialism, and get to the bottom of the problems relating to that struggle. Such is the conclusion to be drawn from British relationships, which show us the *Marxist* essence of the matter, *Marxist without* words.

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From SOCIALISM AND WAR

The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. Towards the War

Chapter III

THE STATE OF AFFAIRS AMONG THE OPPOSITION

There cannot be the least doubt that what interests all internationalists most is the state of affairs among the German Social-Democratic opposition. The official German Social-Democratic Party, the strongest and the foremost in the Second International, has dealt the international workers' organisation the most telling blow. At the same time, however, it was among the German Social-Democrats that the strongest opposition arose. Of all the big European parties, it is in the German party that a loud voice of protest was first raised by comrades who have remained loyal to the banner of socialism. We were delighted to read the journals *Lichstrahlen* and *Die Internationale*.[83] It gave us still greater pleasure to learn of the distribution in Germany of secretly printed revolutionary manifestos, as for example the one entitled: "The Main Enemy Is Within the Country". This showed that the spirit of socialism is alive among the German workers, and that there are still people in Germany capable of upholding revolutionary Marxism.

The split in the present-day socialist movement has most strikingly revealed itself within the German Social-Democratic movement. Three trends can be clearly distinguished here: the opportunist chauvinists, who have nowhere sunk to such foul apostasy as in Germany; the Kautskian "Centre", which have here proved totally incapable of playing any other role than that of menials to the opportunists; the Lefts, who are the only Social-Democrats in Germany.

Naturally, the state of affairs among the German Lefts is what interests us most. In them we see our comrades, the hope of all the internationalist elements.

What is the state of affairs among them?

The journal *Die Internationale* was quite right in writing that the German Lefts are still in a state of ferment, that considerable regroupings still await them, and that within them some elements are more resolute and others less resolute.

Of course, we Russian internationalists do not in the least claim the right to interfere in the internal affairs of our comrades, the German Lefts. We understand that they alone are fully competent to determine their methods of combating the opportunists, according to the conditions of time and place. Only we consider it our right and our duty to express our frank opinion on the state of affairs.

We are convinced that the author of the leading article in the journal *Die Internationale* was perfectly right in stating that the Kautskian "Centre" is doing more harm to Marxism than avowed social-chauvinism. Anyone who plays down differences, or, in the guise of Marxism, now teaches the workers that which Kautskyism is preaching, is in fact lulling the workers, and doing more harm than the Südekums and Heines, who are putting the issue squarely and are compelling the workers to try to make up their own minds.

The Fronde against the "official bodies" which Kautsky and Haase have of late been permitting themselves should mislead nobody. The disagreements between them and the Scheidemanns are not on fundamentals. The former believe that Hindenburg and Mackensen are *already* victorious and that they can already permit themselves the luxury of protesting against annexations. The latter believe that Hindenburg and Mackensen are not *yet* victorious and that, therefore, it is necessary "to hold out to the end".

Kautskyism is waging only a sham struggle against the "official bodies" just to be able, after the war, to conceal from the workers the clash of principles and to paper over the issue with a thousand and one padded resolutions drawn up in a vaguely "Leftist" spirit, in the drafting of which the diplomats of the Second International are such experts.

It is quite understandable that, in their difficult struggle against the "official bodies", the German opposition should also make use of this unprincipled Fronde raised by Kautskyism. However, to any internationalist, hostility towards neo-Kautskyism must remain the touchstone. Only he is a genuine internationalist who combats Kautskyism, and understands that, *even after* its leaders' pretended change of intention, the Centre remains, on all fundamental issues, an *ally of the chauvinists and the opportunists.*

In general, our attitude towards wavering elements in the International is of tremendous importance. These elements—mainly socialists of a *pacifist* shade—are to be found both in the neutral countries and in some of the belligerent countries (in Britain, for example, the Independent Labour Party). Such elements can be our fellow-travellers. Ties with them for a struggle against the social-chauvinists are necessary. It should, however, be remembered that they are *merely* fellow-travellers, and that on all main and fundamental issues, these elements will march against us, not with us, when the International is being restored; they will side with Kautsky, Scheidemann, Vandervelde, and Sembat. At international conferences we must not restrict our programme to what is acceptable to these elements. If we do, we shall fall captive to the wavering pacifists. This is what happened, for example, at the International Women's Conference in Berne.[84] There the German delegation, which supported Comrade Clara Zetkin's point of view, actually played the part of the "Centre". The Women's Conference said only that which was acceptable to the delegates of the opportunist Dutch party led by Troelstra, and to the delegates of the Independent Labour Party; we shall always remember that, at the London conference of "Entente" chauvinists,[85] the I.L.P. voted in favour of Vandervelde's resolution. We would like to express our greatest esteem for the I.L.P. for the courageous struggle it has been waging against the British Government during the war. We know, however, that this party has never taken a Marxist stand. For our part, we hold that today it is the main task of the Social-Democratic opposition to raise the banner of revolutionary Marxism, to tell the workers firmly and definitely how we regard imperialist wars, and to advance a call for mass revolutionary action, i.e., convert the period of imperialist wars into the beginning of a period of civil wars.

Despite everything, revolutionary Social-Democratic elements exist in many countries. They are to be found in Germany, Russia, Scandinavia (where Comrade Höglund represents an influential trend), the Balkans (the party of the Bulgarian "Tesnyaki"), Italy, Britain (part of the British Socialist Party), France (Vaillant himself has admitted in *l'Humanité* that he has received letters of protest from internationalists, but he has not published any one of them in full), Holland (the Tribunists[86]), and so on. To rally these Marxist elements, however small their numbers may be at the outset; to reanimate, in their name, the now forgotten ideals of genuine socialism, and to call upon the workers of all lands to break with the chauvinists and rally about the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day.

Conferences with so-called programmes of "action" have till now confined themselves to announcing a more or less outspoken programme of sheer pacifism. Marxism is not pacifism. Of course, the speediest possible termination of the war must be striven for. However, the "peace" demand acquires a proletarian significance only if a *revolutionary* struggle is called for. Without a series of revolutions, what is called a democratic peace is a philistine Utopia. The purpose of a real programme of action can be served only by a *Marxist* programme which gives the masses a full and clear explanation of what has taken place, explains what imperialism is and how it should be combated, declares openly that the collapse of the Second International was brought about by opportunism, and openly calls for a Marxist International to be built up without and *against* the opportunists. Only a programme that shows that we have faith in ourselves and in Marxism and that we have proclaimed a life-and-death struggle against opportunism will sooner or later win us the sympathy of the genuinely proletarian masses.

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THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Like most programmes or tactical resolutions of the Social-Democratic parties, the Zimmerwald Manifesto[87] proclaims the "right of nations to self-determination". In Nos. 252 and 253 of *Berner Tagwacht*, Parabellum has called "illusory" "the struggle for the non-existent right to self-determination", and *has contraposed* to it "the proletariat's revolutionary mass struggle against capitalism", while at the same time *assuring* us that "we are against annexations" (an assurance is repeated *five* times in Parabellum's article), and against all violence against nations.

The arguments advanced by Parabellum in support of his position boil down to an assertion that today all national problems, like those of Alsace-Lorraine, Armenia, etc., are problems of imperialism; that capital has outgrown the framework of national states; that it is impossible to turn the clock of history back to the obsolete ideal of national states, etc.

Let us see whether Parabellum's reasoning is correct.

First of all, it is Parabellum who is looking backward, not forward, when, in opposing working-class acceptance "of the ideal of the national state", he looks towards Britain, France, Italy, Germany, i.e., countries where the movement for national liberation is a thing of the past, and not towards the East, towards Asia, Africa, and the colonies, where this movement is a thing of the present and the future. Mention of India, China, Persia, and Egypt will be sufficient.

Furthermore, imperialism means that capital has outgrown the framework of national states; it means that national oppression has been extended and heightened on a new historical foundation. Hence, it follows that, despite Parabellum, we must *link* the revolutionary struggle for socialism with a revolutionary programme on the national question.

From what Parabellum says, it appears that, *in the name of* the socialist revolution, he scornfully rejects a consistently revolutionary programme in the sphere of democracy. He is wrong to do so. The proletariat cannot be victorious except through democracy, i.e., by giving full effect to democracy and by linking with each step of its struggle democratic demands formulated in the most resolute terms. It is absurd to *contrapose* the socialist revolution and the revolutionary struggle against capitalism to a *single* problem of democracy, in this case, the national question. We must *combine* the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics on *all* democratic demands: a republic, a militia, the popular election of officials, equal rights for women, the self-determination of nations, etc. While capitalism exists, these demands—all of them—can only be accomplished as an exception, and even then in an incomplete and distorted form. Basing ourselves on the democracy already achieved, and exposing its incompleteness under capitalism, we demand the overthrow of capitalism, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, as a necessary basis both for the abolition of the poverty of the masses and for the *complete* and *all-round* institution of *all* democratic reforms. Some of these reforms will be started before the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, others *in the course* of that overthrow, and still others after it. The social revolution is not a single battle, but a period covering a series of battles over all sorts of problems of economic and democratic reform, which are consummated only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It is for the sake of this final aim that we must formulate *every one* of our democratic demands in a consistently revolutionary way. It is quite conceivable that the workers of some particular country will overthrow the bourgeoisie *before* even a single fundamental democratic reform has been fully achieved. It is, however, quite inconceivable that the proletariat, as a historical class, will be able to defeat the bourgeoisie, unless it is prepared for that by being educated in the spirit of the most consistent and resolutely revolutionary democracy.

Imperialism means the progressively mounting oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of Great Powers; it means a period of wars between the latter to extend and consolidate the oppression of nations; it means a period in which the masses of the people are deceived by hypocritical social-patriots, i.e., individuals who, *under the pretext* of the "freedom of nations", "the right of nations to self-determination", and "defence of the fatherland", justify and defend the oppression of the majority of the world's nations by the Great Powers.

That is why the focal point in the Social-Democratic programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the *essence* of imperialism, and is *deceitfully* evaded by the social-chauvinists and Kautsky. This division is not significant from the angle of bourgeois pacifism or the philistine Utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most significant from the angle of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. It is from this division that *our* definition of the "right of nations to self-determination" must follow, a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, and *in accord* with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism. It is for that right, and in a struggle to achieve sincere recognition for it, that the Social-Democrats of the oppressor nations must demand that the oppressed nations should have the right of secession, for otherwise recognition of equal rights for nations and of international working-class solidarity would in fact be merely empty phrase-mongering, sheer hypocrisy. On the other hand, the Social-Democrats of the oppressed nations must attach prime significance to the unity and the merging of the workers of the oppressed nations with those of the oppressor nations; otherwise these Social-Democrats will involuntarily become the allies of their own national *bourgeoisie*, which *always* betrays the interests of the people and of democracy, and is *always* ready, in its turn, to annex territory and oppress other nations.

The way in which the national question was posed at the end of the sixties of the past century may serve as an instructive example. The petty-bourgeois democrats, to whom any thought of the class struggle and of the socialist revolution was wholly alien, pictured to themselves a Utopia of peaceful competition among free and equal nations, under capitalism. In examining the immediate tasks of the social revolution, the Proudhonists totally "negated" the national question and the right of nations to self-determination. Marx ridiculed French Proudhonism and showed the affinity between it and French chauvinism. ("All Europe must and will sit quietly on their hindquarters until the gentlemen in France abolish 'poverty'.... By the negation of nationalities they appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation.") Marx demanded *the separation of Ireland* from Britain "although after the separation there may come federation", demanding it, not from the standpoint of the petty-bourgeois Utopia of a peaceful capitalism, or from considerations of "justice for Ireland", but from the standpoint of the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the *oppressor*, *i.e.*, *British*, *nation* against capitalism. The freedom of *that* nation has been cramped and mutilated by the fact that it has oppressed another nation. The *British* proletariat's internationalism would remain a hypocritical phrase if *they* did not demand the separation of Ireland. Never in favour of petty states, or the splitting up of states in general, or the principle of federation, Marx considered the separation of an oppressed nation to be a step towards federation, and consequently, not towards a split, but towards concentration, both political and economic, but concentration on the basis of democracy.[88] As Parabellum sees it, Marx was probably waging an "illusory struggle" in demanding separation for Ireland. Actually, however, this demand *alone* presented a consistently revolutionary programme; it alone was in accord with internationalism; it alone advocated concentration along *non*-imperialist lines.

The imperialism of our days has led to a situation in which the Great-Power oppression of nations has become general. The view that a struggle must be conducted against the social-chauvinism of the dominant nations, who are now engaged in an imperialist war to enhance the oppression of nations, and are oppressing most of the world's nations and most of the earth's population—this view must be decisive, cardinal and basic in the national programme of Social-Democracy.

Take a glance at the present trends in Social-Democratic thinking on this subject. The petty-bourgeois Utopians, who dreamt of equality and peace among nations under capitalism, have been succeeded by the social-imperialists. In combating the former, Parabellum is tilting at windmills, thereby unwittingly playing into the hands of the social-imperialists. What is the social-chauvinists' programme on the national question?

They either entirely deny the right to self-determination, using arguments like those advanced by Parabellum (Cunow, Parvus, the Russian opportunists Semkovsky, Liebman, and others), or they recognise that right in a patently hypocritical fashion, namely, without applying it to those very nations that are oppressed by their own nation or by her military allies (Plekhanov, Hyndman, all the pro-French patriots, then Scheidemann, etc., etc.). The most plausible formulation of the social-chauvinist lie, one that is therefore most dangerous to the proletariat, is provided by Kautsky. In word, he is *in favour* of the self-determination of nations; in word, he is for the Social-Democratic Party "*die Selbständigkeit der Nationen allseitig* [!] *und rückhaltlos* [?] *achtet und fordert*"* (*Die Neue Zeit* No. 33, II, S. 241, May 21, 1915). *In deed*, however, he has adapted the national programme to the prevailing social-chauvinism, distorted and docked it; he gives no precise definition of the duties of the socialists in the oppressor nations, and patently falsifies the democratic principle itself when he says that to demand "state independence" (*staatliche Selbständigkeit*) for every nation would mean demanding "too much" ("*zu viel*", *Die Neue Zeit* No. 33, II, S. 77, April 16, 1915). "National autonomy", if you please, is enough! The principal question, the one the imperialist bourgeoisie will not permit discussion of, namely, the question of the *boundaries of a state* that is built upon the oppression of nations, is evaded by Kautsky, who, to please that bourgeoisie, has thrown out of the programme what is most essential. The bourgeoisie are ready to promise all the "national equality" and "national autonomy" you please, so long as the proletariat remain within the framework of legality and "peacefully" submit to them on the question of the state *boundaries*! Kautsky has formulated the national programme of Social-Democracy in a reformist, not a revolutionary manner.

Parabellum's national programme, or, to be more precise, his *assurances* that "we are against annexations", has the wholehearted backing of the *Parteivorstand*,* Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co., for the very reason that the programme does not expose the dominant social-patriots. Bourgeois pacifists would also endorse that programme. Parabellum's splendid *general* programme ("a revolutionary mass struggle against capitalism") serves him—as it did the Proudhonists of the sixties—not for the drawing up, in conformity with it and in its spirit, of a programme on the national question that is uncompromising and equally revolutionary, but in order to leave the way open to the social-patriots. In our imperialist times most socialists throughout the world are members of nations that oppress other nations and strive to extend that oppression. That is why our "struggle against annexations" will be meaningless and will not scare the social-patriots in the least, unless we declare that a socialist of an oppressor nation who does not conduct both peacetime and wartime propaganda in favour of freedom of secession for oppressed nations, is no socialist and no internationalist, but a chauvinist! The socialist of an oppressor nation who fails to conduct such propaganda in defiance of government bans, i.e., in the free, i.e., in the illegal press, is a hypocritical advocate of equal rights for nations!

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* "comprehensively [!] and unreservedly [?] respecting and demanding the independence of nations".—*Ed.*

Parabellum has *only* a single sentence on Russia, which has not yet completed its bourgeois-democratic revolution: "*Selbst das wirtschaftlich sehr zurückgebliebene Russland hat in der Haltung der Polnischen, Lettischen, Armenischen Bourgeoisie gezeigt, dass nicht nur die militärische Bewachung es ist, die die Völker in diesem 'Zuchthaus der Völker' zusammenhält, sondern Bedürfnisse der kapitalistischen Expansion, für die das ungeheure Territorium ein glänzender Boden der Entwicklung ist.*"**.

That is not a "Social-Democratic standpoint" but a liberal-bourgeois one, not an internationalist but a Great-Russian chauvinist standpoint. Parabellum, who is such a fine fighter against the German social-patriots, seems to have little knowledge of Russian chauvinism. For Parabellum's wording to be converted into a Social-Democratic postulate and for Social-Democratic conclusions to be drawn from it, it should be modified and supplemented as follows:

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* The Executive of the German Social-Democratic Party.—*Ed.*

** "Even economically very backward Russia has proved, in the stand taken by the Polish, Lettish and Armenian bourgeoisie that it is not only the military guard that keeps together the peoples in that 'prison of peoples', but also the need for capitalist expansion for which the vast territory is a splendid ground for development."—*Ed.*

Russia is a prison of peoples, not only because of the military-feudal character of tsarism and not only because the Great-Russian bourgeoisie support tsarism, but also because the Polish, etc., bourgeoisie have sacrificed the freedom of nations and democracy in general for the interests of capitalist expansion. The Russian proletariat cannot march at the head of the people towards a victorious democratic revolution (which is its immediate task), or fight alongside its brothers, the proletarians of Europe, for a socialist revolution, without immediately demanding, fully and "*rückhaltlos*",* for all nations oppressed by tsarism, the freedom to secede from Russia. This we demand, not independently of our revolutionary struggle for socialism, but because this struggle will remain a hollow phrase if it is not linked up with a revolutionary approach to all questions of democracy, including the national question. We demand freedom of self-determination, *i.e.*, independence, *i.e.*, freedom of secession for the oppressed nations, not because we have dreamt of splitting up the country economically, or of the ideal of small states, but, on the contrary, because we want large states and the closer unity and even fusion of nations, only on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is *inconceivable* without the freedom to secede. Just as Marx, in 1869, demanded the separation of Ireland, not for a split between Ireland and Britain, but for a subsequent free union between them, not so as to secure "justice for Ireland", but in the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the British proletariat, we in the same way consider the refusal of Russian socialists to demand freedom of self-determination for nations, in the sense we have indicated above, to be a direct betrayal of democracy, internationalism and socialism.

Written in German not earlier
than October 16 (29), 1915
First published in 1927
in *Lenin Miscellany VI*

Collected Works, Vol. 21,
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* "unreservedly".—*Ed.*

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PROPAGANDA LEAGUE[89]

Dear Comrades![*]

We are extremely glad to get your leaflet. Your appeal to the members of the Socialist Party to struggle for a new International, for clear-cut revolutionary socialism as taught by Marx and Engels, and against the opportunism, especially against those who are in favor of working class participation in a war of defence, corresponds fully with the position our party (Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia, *Central Committee*) has taken from the beginning of this war and has always taken during more than ten years.

We send you our sincerest greetings & best wishes of success in our fight for true internationalism.

In our press & in our propaganda we differ from your programme in several points & we think it is quite necessary that we expose you briefly these points in order to make immediate & serious steps for the coordination of the international strife of the uncompromisingly revolutionary Socialists especially Marxists in all countries.

We criticise in the most severe manner the old, Second (1889-1914) International, we declare it dead & not worth to be restored on old basis. But we never say in our press that too great emphasis has been heretofore placed upon so-called "Immediate Demands", and that thereby the socialism can be diluted: we say & we prove that all bourgeois parties, all parties except the working-class revolutionary Party, are liars & hypocrites when they speak about reforms. We try to help the working class to get the smallest possible but real improvement (economic & political) in their situation & we add always that *no* reform can be durable, sincere, serious if not seconded by revolutionary methods of struggle of the masses. We preach always that a socialist party not uniting this struggle for reforms with the revolutionary methods of working-class movement can become a sect, can be severed from the masses, & that that is the most pernicious menace to the success of the clear-cut revolutionary socialism.

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[*] This letter was written by Lenin in English.—*Ed.*

We defend always in our press the democracy in the party. But we never speak against the centralization of the party. We are for the democratic centralism. We say that the centralization of the German Labor movement is not a feeble but a strong and good feature of it. The vice of the present Social-Democratic Party of Germany consists not in the centralization but in the preponderance of the opportunists, which should be excluded from the party especially now after their treacherous conduct in the war. If in any given crisis the small group (for instance our Central Committee is a small group) can act for directing the mighty mass *in a revolutionary direction*, it would be very good. And in *all* crises the masses can not act immediately, the masses want to be helped by the small groups of the central institutions of the parties. Our Central Committee quite at the beginning of this war, in September 1914, has directed the masses not to accept the lie about "the war of defence" & to break off with the opportunists & the "would-be-socialists-jingoes" (we call so the "Socialists" who are *now* in favor of the war of defence). We think that this centralistic measure of our Central Committee was useful & necessary.

We agree with you that we must be against craft Unionism & in favor of industrial Unionism, i.e. of big, centralized Trade Unions & in favor of the most active participation of *all* members of party in *all* economic struggles & in *all* trade union & cooperative organizations of the working class. But we consider that such people as Mr. Legien in Germany & Mr. Gompers in the U. St. are bourgeois and that their policy is not a socialist but a nationalistic, middle class policy. Mr. Legien, Mr. Gompers & similar persons are not the representatives of working class, they represent the aristocracy & bureaucracy of the working class.

We entirely sympathize with you when in political action you claim the "mass action" of the workers. The German revolutionary & internationalist Socialists claim it also. In our press we try to define with more details what must be understood by political mass action, as f.i. political strikes (very usual in Russia), street demonstrations and civil war prepared by the present imperialist war between nations.

We do not preach unity in the *present* (prevailing in the Second International) socialist parties. On the contrary we preach *secession* with the opportunists. The war is the best object-lesson. In *all* countries the opportunists, their leaders, their most influential dailies & reviews are *for* the war, in other words, they have in reality *united* with "their" national bourgeoisie (middle class, capitalists) against the proletarian masses. You say, that in America there are also Socialists who have expressed themselves in favor of the participation in a war of defence. We are convinced, that unity with such men is an evil. *Such* unity is unity with the national middle class & capitalists, and a *division* with the international revolutionary working class. And we are for secession with nationalistic opportunists and unity with international revolutionary Marxists & working-class parties.

We never object in our press to the unity of S.P. & S.L.P. in America. We always quote letters from Marx & Engels (especially to Sorge, active member of American socialist movement), where both condemn the sectarian character of the S.L.P.[90]

We fully agree with you in your criticism of the old International. We have participated in the conference of Zimmerwald (Switzerland) 5-8.IX.1915. We have formed there a *left wing*, and have proposed *our resolution* & our draught of a manifesto. We have just published these documents in German & I send them to you (with the German translation of our small book about "Socialism & War"), hoping that in your League there are probably comrades that know German. If you could help us to publish these things in English (it is possible only in America and later on we should send it to England), we would gladly accept your help.

In our struggle for true internationalism & against "jingo-socialism" we always quote in our press the example of the opportunist leaders of the S.P. in America, who are in favor of restrictions of the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers (especially after the Congress of Stuttgart, 1907, & *against* the decisions of Stuttgart). We think that one can not be internationalist & be at the same time in favor of such restrictions. And we assert that Socialists in America, especially English Socialists, belonging to the ruling, and *oppressing* nation, who are not against any restrictions of immigration, against the possession of colonies (Hawaii) and for the entire freedom of colonies, that such Socialists are in reality jingoes.

For conclusion I repeat once more best greetings & wishes for your League. We should be very glad to have a further information from you & to *unite* our struggle against opportunism & for the true internationalism.

Yours *N. Lenin*

N.B. There are *two* Soc.-Dem. parties in Russia. Our party ("*Central* Committee") is against opportunism. The other party ("*Organization* Committee") is opportunist. We are *against* the unity with them.

You can write to our official address (Bibliothèque russe. For the C. K. 7 rue Hugo de Senger. 7, Genève. Switzerland). But better write to my personal address: Wl. Ulianow. Seidenweg 4a, III *Berne*. Switzerland.

Written in English between
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(November 13-22), 1915
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From OPPORTUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

II

It would be absurd to regard the whole question as one of personalities. What has opportunism to do with it when men like *Plekhanov* and *Guesde*, etc.?—asks *Kautsky* (*Die Neue Zeit*, May 28, 1915). What has opportunism to do with it when *Kautsky*, etc.?—replies *Axelrod* on behalf of the opportunists of the Quadruple Entente[91] (*Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie*, Zurich, 1915, p. 21). This is a complete farce. *If the crisis of the whole movement is to be explained, an examination must be made, firstly, of the economic significance of the present policy; secondly, its underlying ideas; and thirdly, its connection with the history of the various trends in the socialist movement.*

What is the economic substance of defencism in the war of 1914-15? The bourgeoisie of *all* the big powers are waging the war to divide and exploit the world, and oppress other nations. A few crumbs of the bourgeoisie's huge profits may come the way of the small group of labour bureaucrats, labour aristocrats, and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. Social-chauvinism and opportunism have the same class basis, namely, the alliance of a small section of privileged workers with "their" national bourgeoisie *against* the working-class masses; the alliance between the lackeys of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie *against* the class the latter is exploiting.

Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same political content, namely, class collaboration, repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, repudiation of revolutionary action, unconditional acceptance of bourgeois legality, confidence in the bourgeoisie and lack of confidence in the proletariat. *Social-chauvinism is the direct continuation and consummation of British liberal labour politics, of Millerandism and Bernsteinism.*

The struggle between the two main trends in the labour movement—revolutionary socialism and opportunist socialism—fills the entire period from 1889 to 1914. Even today there are two main trends on the attitude to war in every country. Let us drop the bourgeois and opportunist habit of referring to personalities. Let us take the *trends* in a number of countries. Let us take ten European countries: Germany, Britain, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium and France. In the first eight the division into opportunist and revolutionary trends corresponds to the division into social-chauvinists and internationalists. In Germany the strongholds of social-chauvinism are *Sozialistische Monatshefte* and Legien and Co.; in Britain the Fabians and the Labour Party (the I.L.P. has always been allied with them and has supported their organ, and in this bloc it has always been weaker than the social-chauvinists, whereas three-sevenths of the B.S.P. are internationalists); in Russia this trend is represented by *Nasha Zarya* (now *Nashe Dyelo*), by the Organising Committee, and by the Duma group led by Chkheidze[92]; in Italy it is represented by the reformists with Bissolati at their head; in Holland, by Troelstra's party; in Sweden, by the majority of the Party led by Branting; in Bulgaria, by the so-called "Shiroki" socialists; in Switzerland by Greulich and Co. In *all* these countries it is the revolutionary Social-Democrats who have voiced a more or less vigorous protest against social-chauvinism. France and Belgium are the two exceptions; there internationalism also exists, but is very weak.

Social-chauvinism is opportunism in its finished form. It is quite ripe for an open, frequently vulgar, alliance with the bourgeoisie and the general staffs. It is this alliance that gives it great power and a monopoly of the legal press and of deceiving the masses. *It is absurd to go on regarding opportunism as an inner-party phenomenon.* It is ridiculous to think of carrying out the Basle resolution together with David, Legien, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Webb. Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's "own" national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat. This does not mean that an immediate break with the opportunists is possible everywhere; it means only that historically this break is imminent; that it is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; that history, which has led us from "peaceful" capitalism to imperialist capitalism, has paved the way for this break. *Volentem ducunt fata, nolentem trahunt.*[*]

III

This is very well understood by the shrewd representatives of the bourgeoisie. That is why they are so lavish in their praise of the present socialist parties, headed by the "defenders of the fatherland", i.e., the defenders of imperialist plunder. That is why the social-chauvinist leaders are rewarded by their governments either with ministerial posts (in France and Britain), or with a monopoly of unhindered legal existence (in Germany and Russia). That is why in Germany, where the Social-Democratic Party was strongest and where its transformation into a national-liberal *counter-revolutionary* labour party has been most obvious, things have got to the stage where the public prosecutor qualifies the struggle between the "minority" and the "majority" as "incitement to class hatred"! That is why the greatest concern of the clever opportunists is to retain the former "unity" of the old parties, which did the bourgeoisie so many good turns in 1914 and 1915. The views held by these opportunists in all countries of the world were expounded with commendable frankness by a German Social-Democrat in an article signed "Monitor" which appeared in April 1915, in the reactionary magazine *Preussische Jahrbücher*. Monitor thinks that it would be very dangerous for the bourgeoisie if the Social-Democrats were to move *still further to the right*. "It must preserve its character as a labour party with socialist ideals; for the day it gives this up a new party will arise and adopt the programme the old party had disavowed, giving it a still more radical formulation" (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1915, No. 4, pp. 50-51).

Monitor hit the nail on the head. That is just what the British Liberals and the French Radicals have always wanted—phrases with a revolutionary ring to deceive the masses and induce them to place their trust in the Lloyd Georges, the Sembats, the Renaudels, the Legiens, and the Kautskys, in the men capable of preaching "defence of the fatherland" in a predatory war.

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[*] The fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling.—*Ed.*

But Monitor represents only one variety of opportunism, the frank, crude, cynical variety. Others act with stealth, subtlety, and "honesty". Engels once said that for the working class "honest" opportunists were the greatest danger.[93] Here is one example.

Kautsky wrote in *Die Neue Zeit* (November 26, 1915) as follows: "The opposition against the majority is growing; the masses are in an opposition mood.... After the war [only *after* the war?—*N.L.*] class antagonisms will become so sharp that radicalism will gain the upper hand among the masses.... After the war [only *after* the war?—*N. L.*] we shall be menaced with the desertion of the radical elements from the Party and their influx into the party of anti-parliamentary [?? meaning extra-parliamentary] mass action.... Thus, our Party is splitting up into two extreme camps which have nothing in common." To preserve unity, Kautsky tries to persuade the majority in the Reichstag to allow the minority to make a few radical parliamentary speeches. That means Kautsky wants to use a few radical parliamentary speeches to reconcile the revolutionary masses with the opportunists, who have "nothing in common" with revolution, who have long had the leadership of the trade unions, and now, relying on their close alliance with the bourgeoisie and the government, have also captured the leadership of the Party. What essential difference is there between this and Monitor's "programme"? There is none, save for the sugary phrases which prostitute Marxism.

At a meeting of the Reichstag group on March 18, 1915, *Wurm*, a Kautskyite, "warned" against "pulling the strings too taut. There is growing opposition among the workers' masses to the majority of the group, we must keep to the Marxist [?! probably a misprint: this should read "the Monitor"] Centre" (*Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg! Material zum Fall Liebknecht. Als Manuskript gedruckt*,* p. 67). Thus we find that the revolutionary sentiment of the *masses* was admitted as a *fact* on behalf of *all* the Kautskyites (the so-called Centre) *as early as March, 1915*!! But eight and a half months later, Kautsky again comes forward with the proposal to "reconcile" the militant masses with the opportunist, counter-revolutionary party— and he wants to do this with a few revolutionary-sounding phrases!!

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* *The Class Struggle Against the War. Material on the Liebknecht Case.* Printed for private circulation only.—*Ed.*

War is often useful in exposing what is rotten and discarding the conventionalities.

Let us compare the British Fabians with the German Kautskyites. Here is what a *real* Marxist, Frederick Engels, wrote about the former on January 18, 1893: "...a band of careerists who have understanding enough to realise the inevitability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the raw proletariat alone.... Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle" (Letters to Sorge, p. 390).

And on November 11, 1893, he wrote: "...these haughty bourgeois who kindly condescend to emancipate the proletariat from above if only it would have sense enough to realise that such a raw, uneducated mass cannot liberate itself and can achieve nothing without the kindness of these clever lawyers, writers and sentimental old women" (ibid., p. 401).

In theory Kautsky looks down upon the Fabians with the contempt of a Pharisee for a poor sinner, for he swears by "Marxism". But what actual difference is there between the two? Both signed the Basle Manifesto,[94] and both treated it as Wilhelm II treated Belgian neutrality. But Marx all his life castigated those who strove to quench the revolutionary spirit of the workers.

Kautsky has put forward his new theory of "ultra-imperialism" in opposition to the revolutionary Marxists. By this he means that the "rivalries of national finance capitals" are to be superseded by the "joint exploitation of the world by international finance capital" (*Die Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915). But he adds: "We do not as yet have sufficient data to decide whether this new phase of capitalism is possible." On the grounds of the mere assumption of a "new phase", which he does not even dare declare definitely "possible", the inventor of this "phase" rejects his own revolutionary declarations as well as the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat—rejects them *now*, in the "phase" of a crisis, which *has already broken out*, the phase of war and the unprecedented aggravation of class antagonisms! Is this not Fabianism at its most abominable?

Axelrod, the leader of the Russian Kautskyites, says, "The centre of gravity of the problem of internationalising the proletarian movement for emancipation is the internationalisation of everyday practice"; for example, "labour protection and insurance legislation must become the object of the workers' international organisation and action" (Axelrod, *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, Zurich, 1915, pp. 39-40). Not only Legien, David and the Webbs, but even Lloyd George himself, and Naumann, Briand and Milyukov would quite obviously subscribe to such "internationalism". As in 1912, Axelrod is quite prepared to utter the most revolutionary phrases for the very distant future, if the future International "comes out [against the governments in the event of war] and raises a revolutionary storm". How brave we are! But when it comes to supporting and developing the incipient revolutionary ferment among the masses *now*, Axelrod says that these tactics of revolutionary mass action "would be justified to some extent if we were on the very eve of the social revolution, as was the case in Russia, for example, where the student demonstrations of 1901 heralded the approaching decisive battles against absolutism". At the present moment, however, all that is "utopia", "Bakuninism", etc. This is fully in the spirit of Kolb, David, Südekum and Legien.

What dear old Axelrod forgets is that in 1901 nobody in Russia knew, or could have known, that the first "decisive battle" would take place four years later—please note, *four* years later—and that it would be "*in*decisive". Nevertheless, we revolutionary Marxists alone were right at that time: we ridiculed the Krichevskys and Martynovs, who called for an immediate assault. We merely advised the workers to kick out the opportunists everywhere and to exert every effort to support, sharpen and extend the demonstrations and other mass revolutionary action. The present situation in Europe is absolutely similar. It would be absurd to call for an "immediate" assault; but it would be a shame to call oneself a Social-Democrat and not to advise the workers to break with the opportunists and exert all their efforts to strengthen, deepen, extend and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations. Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and when revolutionary ferment starts no one can say whether and when it will lead to a "real", "genuine" revolution. Kautsky and Axelrod are giving the workers old, shop-worn, counter-revolutionary advice. Kautsky and Axelrod are feeding the masses with hopes that the *future* International will surely be revolutionary, but they are doing this for the sole purpose of protecting, camouflaging and prettifying the *present* domination of the counter-revolutionary elements—the Legiens, Davids, Vanderveldes and Hyndmans. Is it not obvious that "unity" with Legien and Co. is the best means of preparing the "future" revolutionary International?

"It would be folly to strive to convert the world war into civil war," declares *David*, the leader of the German opportunists (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg*, 1915, p. 172), in reply to the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party, November 1, 1914. This manifesto says, *inter alia*:

"However difficult such a transformation may seem at any given moment, socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction now that war has become a fact."*

(This passage is also quoted by David, p. 171). A month before David's book appeared our Party published its resolutions defining "systematic preparation" as follows: (1) refusal to vote for credits; (2) disruption of the class truce; (3) formation of illegal organisations; (4) support for solidarity manifestations in the trenches; (5) support for all revolutionary mass action.**

David is almost as brave as Axelrod. In 1912, he did not think that reference to the Paris Commune in anticipation of the war was "folly".

Plekhanov, a typical representative of the Entente social-chauvinists, takes the same view of revolutionary tactics as David. He calls them a "farcical dream". But listen to *Kolb*, an avowed opportunist, who wrote: "The consequence of the tactics of Liebknecht's followers would be that the struggle within the German nation would be brought up to boiling point" (*Die Sozialdemokratie am Scheidewege*, p. 50).

But what is a struggle brought up to boiling point if not civil war?

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* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 34.—*Ed.*

** Ibid., p. 161.—*Ed.*

If our Central Committee's tactics, which broadly coincide with those of the Zimmerwald Left,[95] were "folly", "dreams", "adventurism", "Bakuninism"—as David, Plekhanov, Axelrod, Kautsky and others have asserted—they could never lead to a "struggle within a nation", let alone to a struggle brought up to boiling point. Nowhere in the world have anarchist phrases brought about a struggle within a nation. But the facts indicate that precisely in 1915, as a result of the crisis produced by the war, revolutionary ferment among the masses is on the increase, and there is a spread of strikes and political demonstrations in Russia, strikes in Italy and in Britain, and hunger demonstrations and political demonstrations in Germany. Are these not the beginnings of revolutionary mass struggles?

The sum and substance of Social-Democracy's practical programme in this war is to support, develop, extend and sharpen mass revolutionary action, and to set up illegal organisations, for without them there is no way of telling the truth to the masses of people even in the "free" countries. The rest is either lies or mere verbiage, whatever its trappings of opportunist or pacifist theory.*

When we are told that these "Russian tactics" (David's expression) are not suitable for Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. On October 30, a delegation of Berlin women comrades called on the Party's Presidium in Berlin, and stated that "now that we have a large organising apparatus it is much easier to distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to organise 'banned meetings' than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law.... Ways and means are not lacking, but the will evidently is" (*Berner Tagwacht*, 1915, No. 271).

Had these bad comrades been led astray by the Russian "sectarians", etc.? Is it these comrades who represent the real *masses*, or is it Legien and Kautsky? Legien, who in his report on January 27, 1915, fumed against the "anarchistic" idea of forming underground organisations; or Kautsky, who has become such a counter-revolutionary that on November 26, *four* days before the 10,000-strong demonstration in Berlin, he denounced street demonstrations as "adventurism"!!

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* At the International Women's Congress held in Berne in March 1915, the representatives of the Central Committee of our Party urged that it was absolutely necessary to set up illegal organisations. This was rejected. The British women laughed at this proposal and praised British "liberty". But a few months later British newspapers, like the *Labour Leader*, reached us with blank spaces, and then came the news of police raids, confiscation of pamphlets, arrests, and Draconian sentences imposed on comrades who had spoken in Britain about peace, nothing but peace!

We've had enough of empty talk, and of prostituted "Marxism" *à la* Kautsky! After twenty-five years of the Second International, after the Basle Manifesto, the workers will no longer believe fine words. Opportunism is rotten-ripe; it has been transformed into social-chauvinism and has definitely deserted to the bourgeois camp. It has severed its spiritual and political ties with Social-Democracy. It will also break off its organisational ties. The workers are already demanding "illegal" pamphlets and "banned" meetings, i.e., underground organisations to support the revolutionary mass movement. Only when "war against war" is conducted on these lines does it cease to be empty talk and becomes Social-Democratic work. In spite of all difficulties, setbacks, mistakes, delusions and interruptions, this work will lead humanity to the victorious proletarian revolution.

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From IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM

A Popular Outline

IV. EXPORT OF CAPITAL

Typical of the old capitalism, when free competition held undivided sway, was the export of *goods*. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of *capital*.

Capitalism is commodity production at its highest stage of development, when labour-power itself becomes a commodity. The growth of internal exchange, and, particularly, of international exchange, is a characteristic feature of capitalism. The uneven and spasmodic development of individual enterprises, individual branches of industry and individual countries is inevitable under the capitalist system. England became a capitalist country before any other, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, having adopted free trade, claimed to be the "workshop of the world", the supplier of manufactured goods to all countries, which in exchange were to keep her provided with raw materials. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, *this* monopoly was already undermined; for other countries, sheltering themselves with "protective" tariffs, developed into independent capitalist states. On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly, monopolist associations of capitalists in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly, the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous "surplus of capital" has arisen in the advanced countries.

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today is everywhere lagging terribly behind industry, if it could raise the living standards of the masses, who in spite of the amazing technical progress are everywhere still half-starved and poverty-stricken, there could be no question of a surplus of capital. This "argument" is very often advanced by the petty-bourgeois critics of capitalism. But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism; for both uneven development and a semi-starvation level of existence of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and constitute premises of this mode of production. As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilised not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap. The export of capital is made possible by a number of backward countries having already been drawn into world capitalist intercourse; main railways have either been or are being built in those countries, elementary conditions for industrial development have been created, etc. The need to export capital arises from the fact that in a few countries capitalism has become "overripe" and (owing to the backward state of agriculture and the poverty of the masses) capital cannot find a field for "profitable" investment.

Here are approximate figures showing the amount of capital invested abroad by the three principal countries*:

Capital Invested Abroad

(000, 000, 000 francs)

Year	Great Britain	France	Germany
1862	3.6	—	—
1872	15.0	10 (1869)	—
1882	22.0	15 (1880)	?
1893	42.0	20 (1890)	?
1902	62.0	27-37	12.5
1914	75-100.0	60	44.0

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* Hobson, *Imperialism*, London, 1902, p. 58; Riesser, op. cit., S. 395 und 404; P. Arndt in *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, Bd. 7, 1916, S. 35; Neymarck in *Bulletin*; Hilferding, *Finance Capital*, p. 492;

This table shows that the export of capital reached enormous dimensions only at the beginning of the twentieth century. Before the war the capital invested abroad by the three principal countries amounted to between 175,000 million and 200,000 million francs. At the modest rate of 5 per cent, the income from this sum should reach from 8,000 to 10,000 million francs a year—a sound basis for the imperialist oppression and exploitation of most of the countries and nations of the world, for the capitalist parasitism of a handful of wealthy states!

How is this capital invested abroad distributed among the various countries? *Where* is it invested? Only an approximate answer can be given to these questions, but it is one sufficient to throw light on certain general relations and connections of modern imperialism.

Distribution (Approximate) of Foreign Capital in Different Parts of the Globe (circa 1910)

	Great Britain	France	Germany	Total
	(000,000,000 marks)			
Europe	4	23	18	45
America	37	4	10	51
Asia, Africa and Australia	29	8	7	44
Total	70	35	35	140

The principal spheres of investment of British capital are the British colonies, which are very large also in America (for example, Canada), not to mention Asia, etc. In this case, enormous exports of capital are bound up most closely with vast colonies, of the importance of which for imperialism I shall speak later. In the case of France the situation is different. French capital exports are invested mainly in

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Lloyd George, Speech in the House of Commons, May 4, 1915, reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 5, 1915; B. Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft*, Jena, 1912, S. 235 et seq.; Dr. Siegmund Schilder, *Entwicklungstendenzen der Weltwirtschaft*, Berlin, 1912, Band I, S. 150; George Paish, "Great Britain's Capital Investments, etc.", in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910-11, p. 167 et seq.; Georges Diouritch, *L'Expansion des banques allemandes à l'étranger, ses rapports avec le développement économique de l'Allemagne*, Paris, 1909, p. 84.

Europe, primarily in Russia (at least ten thousand million francs). This is mainly *loan* capital, government loans, and not capital invested in industrial undertakings. Unlike British colonial imperialism, French imperialism might be termed usury imperialism. In the case of Germany, we have a third type; colonies are inconsiderable, and German capital invested abroad is divided most evenly between Europe and America.

The export of capital influences and greatly accelerates the development of capitalism in those countries to which it is exported. While, therefore, the export of capital may tend to a certain extent to arrest development in the capital-exporting countries, it can only do so by expanding and deepening the further development of capitalism throughout the world.

The capital-exporting countries are nearly always able to obtain certain "advantages", the character of which throws light on the peculiarity of the epoch of finance capital and monopoly. The following passage, for instance, appeared in the Berlin review, *Die Bank*, for October 1913:

"A comedy worthy of the pen of Aristophanes is lately being played on the international capital market. Numerous foreign countries, from Spain to the Balkan states, from Russia to Argentina, Brazil and China, are openly or secretly coming into the big money market with demands, sometimes very persistent, for loans. The money markets are not very bright at the moment and the political outlook is not promising. But not a single money market dares to refuse a loan for fear that its neighbour may forestall it, consent to grant a loan and so secure some reciprocal service. In these international transactions the creditor nearly always manages to secure some extra benefit: a favourable clause in a commercial treaty, a coaling station, a contract to construct a harbour, a fat concession, or an order for guns."*

Finance capital has created the epoch of monopolies, and monopolies introduce everywhere monopolist principles: the utilisation of "connections" for profitable transactions takes the place of competition on the open market. The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor country, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc. In the course of the last two decades (1890-1910), France has very often resorted to this method. The export of capital thus becomes a means of encouraging the export of commodities. In this connection, transactions between particularly big firms assume a form which, as Schilder* "mildly" puts it, "borders on corruption". Krupp in Germany, Schneider in France, Armstrong in Britain are instances of firms which have close connections with powerful banks and governments and which cannot easily be "ignored" when a loan is being arranged.

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* *Die Bank*, 1913, 2, S. 1024.

France, when granting loans to Russia, "squeezed" her in the commercial treaty of September 16, 1905, stipulating for certain concessions to run till 1917. She did the same in the commercial treaty with Japan of August 19, 1911. The tariff war between Austria and Serbia, which lasted, with a seven months' interval, from 1906 to 1911, was partly caused by Austria and France competing to supply Serbia with war materials. In January 1912, Paul Deschanel stated in the Chamber of Deputies that from 1908 to 1911 French firms had supplied war materials to Serbia to the value of 45 million francs.

A report from the Austro-Hungarian Consul at São-Paulo (Brazil) states: "The Brazilian railways are being built chiefly by French, Belgian, British and German capital. In the financial operations connected with the construction of these railways the countries involved stipulate for orders for the necessary railway materials."

Thus finance capital, literally, one might say, spreads its net over all countries of the world. An important role in this is played by banks founded in the colonies and by their branches. German imperialists look with envy at the "old" colonial countries which have been particularly "successful" in providing for themselves in this respect. In 1904, Great Britain had 50 colonial banks with 2,279 branches (in 1910 there were 72 banks with 5,449 branches); France had 20 with 136 branches; Holland, 16 with 68 branches; and Germany had "only" 13 with 70 branches.** The American capitalists, in their turn, are jealous of the English and German: "In South America," they complained in 1915, "five German banks have forty branches and five British banks have sevventy branches.... Britain and Germany have invested in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in the last twenty-five years approximately four thousand million dollars, and as a result together enjoy 46 per cent of the total trade of these three countries."*

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* Schilder, op. cit., S. 346, 350, 371.

** Riesser, op. cit., 4th ed., S. 375; Diouritch, p. 283.

The capital-exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the *actual* division of the world.

VI. DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG THE GREAT POWERS

In his book, on "the territorial development of the European colonies", A. Supan,** the geographer, gives the following brief summary of this development at the end of the nineteenth century:

Percentage of Territory Belonging to the European Colonial Powers (Including the United States)

	1876	1900	Increase or decrease
Africa	10.8	90.4	+79.6
Polynesia	56.8	98.9	+42.1
Asia	51.5	56.6	+5.1
Australia	100.0	100.0	—
America	27.5	27.2	—0.3

"The characteristic feature of this period," he concludes, "is, therefore, the division of Africa and Polynesia." As there are no unoccupied territories—that is, territories that do not belong to any state—in Asia and America, it is necessary to amplify Supan's conclusion and say that the characteristic feature of the period under review is the final partitioning of the globe—final, not in the sense that *repartition* is impossible; on the contrary, repartitions are possible and inevitable—but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has *completed* the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future *only* redivision is possible, i.e., territories can only pass from one "owner" to another, instead of passing as ownerless territory to an "owner".

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* *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. LIX, May 1915, p. 301. In the same volume, on p. 331, we read that the well-known statistician Paish, in the last issue of the financial magazine *The Statist*, estimated the amount of capital exported by Britain, Germany, France, Belgium and Holland at $ 40,000 million, i.e., 200,000 million francs.

** A. Supan, *Die territoriale Entwicklung der europäischen Kolonien*, 1906, S. 254.

Hence, we are living in a peculiar epoch of world colonial policy, which is most closely connected with the "latest stage in the development of capitalism", with finance capital. For this reason, it is essential first of all to deal in greater detail with the facts, in order to ascertain as exactly as possible what distinguishes this epoch from those preceding it, and what the present situation is. In the first place, two questions of fact arise here: is an intensification of colonial policy, a sharpening of the struggle for colonies, observed precisely in the epoch of finance capital? And how, in this respect, is the world divided at the present time?

The American writer, Morris, in his book on the history of colonisation,* made an attempt to sum up the data on the colonial possessions of Great Britain, France and Germany during different periods of the nineteenth century. The following is a brief summary of the results he has obtained:

Colonial Possessions

Year	Great Britain		France		Germany	
	Area (000, 000 sq.m.)	Pop. (000, 000)	Area (000, 000 sq.m.)	Pop. (000,000)	Area (000,000 sq.m.)	Pop. (000, 000)
1815-30	?	126.4	0.02	0.5	—	—
1860	2.5	145.1	0.2	3.4	—	—
1880	7.7	267.9	0.7	7.5	—	—
1899	9.3	309.0	3.7	56.4	1.0	14.7

For Great Britain, the period of the enormous expansion of colonial conquests was that between 1860 and 1880, and it was also very considerable in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. For France and Germany this period falls precisely in these twenty years. We saw above that the development of pre-monopoly capitalism, of capitalism in which free competition was predominant, reached its limit in the 1860s and 1870s. We now see that it is *precisely after that period* that the tremendous "boom" in colonial conquests begins, and that the struggle for the territorial division of the world becomes extraordinarily sharp. It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, *is connected* with the intensification of the struggle for the partitioning of the world.

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* Henry C. Morris, *The History of Colonization*, New York, 1900, Vol. II, p. 88; Vol. I, p. 419; Vol. II, p. 304.

Hobson, in his work on imperialism, marks the years 1884-1900 as the epoch of intensified "expansion" of the chief European states. According to his estimate, Great Britain during these years acquired 3,700,000 square miles of territory with 57,000,000 inhabitants; France, 3,600,000 square miles with 36,500,000; Germany, 1,000,000 square miles with 14,700,000; Belgium, 900,000 square miles with 30,000,000; Portugal, 800,000 square miles with 9,000,000 inhabitants. The scramble for colonies by all the capitalist states at the end of the nineteenth century and particularly since the 1880 sis a commonly known fact in the history of diplomacy and of foreign policy.

In the most flourishing period of free competition in Great Britain, i.e., between 1840 and 1860, the leading British bourgeois politicians were *opposed* to colonial policy and were of the opinion that the liberation of the colonies, their complete separation from Britain, was inevitable and desirable. M. Beer, in an article, "Modern British Imperialism",* published in 1898, shows that in 1852, Disraeli, a statesman who was generally inclined towards imperialism, declared: "The colonies are millstones round our necks." But at the end of the nineteenth century the British heroes of the hour were Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, who openly advocated imperialism and applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner!

It is not without interest to observe that even then these leading British bourgeois politicians saw the connection between what might be called the purely economic and the socio-political roots of modern imperialism. Chamberlain advocated imperialism as a "true, wise and economical policy", and pointed particularly to the German, American and Belgian competition which Great Britain was encountering in the world market. Salvation lies in monopoly, said the capitalists as they formed cartels, syndicates and trusts. Salvation lies in monopoly, echoed the political leaders of the bourgeoisie, hastening to appropriate the parts of the world not yet shared out. And Cecil Rhodes, we are informed by his intimate friend, the journalist Stead, expressed his imperialist views to him in 1895 in the following terms: "I was in the East End of London [a working-class quarter] yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread! bread!' and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists."*

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* *Die Neue Zeit*, XVI, I, 1898, S. 302.

That was said in 1895 by Cecil Rhodes, millionaire, a king of finance, the man who was mainly responsible for the Anglo-Boer War. True, his defence of imperialism is crude and cynical, but in substance it does not differ from the "theory" advocated by Messrs. Maslov, Südekum, Potresov, David, the founder of Russian Marxism[96] and others. Cecil Rhodes was a somewhat more honest social-chauvinist....

To present as precise a picture as possible of the territorial division of the world and of the changes which have occurred during the last decades in this respect, I shall utilise the data furnished by Supan in the work already quoted on the colonial possessions of all the powers of the world. Supan takes the years 1876 and 1900; I shall take the year 1876—a year very aptly selected, for it is precisely by that time that the pre-monopolist stage of development of West-European capitalism can be said to have been, in the main, completed—and the year 1914, and instead of Supan's figures I shall quote the more recent statistics of Hübner's *Geographical and Statistical Tables.* Supan gives figures only for colonies; I think it useful, in order to present a complete picture of the division of the world, to add brief data on non-colonial and semi-colonial countries, in which category I place Persia, China and Turkey; the first of these countries is already almost completely a colony, the second and third are becoming such.

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* Ibid., S. 304.

We thus get the following result:

Colonial Possessions of the Great Powers
(000,000 square kilometres and 000,000 inhabitants)

	Colonies				Metropolitan countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia . . .	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France . . .	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.6	11.1	95.1
Germany . .	—	—	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
United *States*	—	—	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Japan . . .	—	—	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
Total for 6 Great Powers	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2	81.5	960.6

Colonies of other powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.) . .	9.9	45.3
Semi-colonial countries (Persia, China, Turkey) . . .	14.5	361.2
Other countries	28.0	289.9
Total for the world	133.9	1,657.0

We clearly see from these figures how "complete" was the partition of the world at the turn of the twentieth century. After 1876 colonial possessions increased to enormous dimensions, by more than fifty per cent, from 40,000,000 to 65,000,000 square kilometres for the six biggest powers; the increase amounts to 25,000,000 square kilometres, fifty per cent more than the area of the metropolitan countries (16,500,000 square kilometres). In 1876 three powers had no colonies, and a fourth, France, had scarcely any. By 1914 these four powers had acquired colonies with an area of 14,100,000 square kilometres, i.e., about half as much again as the area of Europe, with a population of nearly 100,000,000. The unevenness in the rate of expansion of colonial possessions is very great. If, for instance, we compare France, Germany and Japan, which do not differ very much in area and population, we see that the first has acquired almost three times as much colonial territory as the other two combined. In regard to finance capital, France, at the beginning of the period we are considering, was also, perhaps, several times richer than Germany and Japan put together. In addition to, and on the basis of, purely economic conditions, geographical and other conditions also affect the dimensions of colonial possessions. However strong the process of levelling the world, of levelling the economic and living conditions in different countries, may have been in the past decades as a result of the pressure of large-scale industry, exchange and finance capital, considerable differences still remain; and among the six countries mentioned we see, firstly, young capitalist countries (America, Germany, Japan) whose progress has been extraordinarily rapid; secondly, countries with an old capitalist development (France and Great Britain), whose progress lately has been much slower than that of the previously mentioned countries, and thirdly, a country most backward economically (Russia), where modern capitalist imperialism is enmeshed, so to speak, in a particularly close network of pre-capitalist relations.

Alongside the colonial possessions of the Great Powers, we have placed the small colonies of the small states, which are, so to speak, the next objects of a possible and probable "redivision" of colonies. These small states mostly retain their colonies only because the big powers are torn by conflicting interests, friction, etc., which prevent them from coming to an agreement on the division of the spoils. As to the "semi-colonial" states, they provide an example of the transitional forms which are to be found in all spheres of nature and society. Finance capital is such a great, such a decisive, you might say, force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject, to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence; we shall shortly see examples of this. Of course, finance capital finds most "convenient", and derives the greatest profit from, a *form* of subjection which involves the loss of the political independence of the subjected countries and peoples. In this respect, the semi-colonial countries provide a typical example of the "middle stage".

It is natural that the struggle for these semi-dependent countries should have become particularly bitter in the epoch of finance capital, when the rest of the world has already been divided up.

Colonial policy and imperialism existed before the latest stage of capitalism, and even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and practised imperialism. But "general" disquisitions on imperialism, which ignore, or put into the background, the fundamental difference between socio-economic formations, inevitably turn into the most vapid banality or bragging, like the comparison: "Greater Rome and Greater Britain."* Even the capitalist colonial policy of *previous* stages of capitalism is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital.

The principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism is the domination of monopolist associations of big employers. These monopolies are most firmly established when *all* the sources of raw materials are captured by one group, and we have seen with what zeal the international capitalist associations exert every effort to deprive their rivals of all opportunity of competing, to buy up, for example, iron-fields, oil-fields, etc. Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle against competitors, including the case of the adversary wanting to be protected by a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate the struggle for the acquisition of colonies.

"It may be asserted," writes Schilder, "although it may sound paradoxical to some, that in the more or less foreseeable future the growth of the urban and industrial population is more likely to be hindered by a shortage of raw materials for industry than by a shortage of food." For example, there is a growing shortage of timber—the price of which is steadily rising—of leather, and of raw materials for the textile industry. "Associations of manufacturers are making efforts to create an equilibrium between agriculture and industry in the whole of world economy; as an example of this we might mention the International Federation of Cotton Spinners' Associations in several of the most important industrial countries, founded in 1904, and the European Federation of Flax Spinners' Associations, founded on the same model in 1910."*

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* C. P. Lucas, *Greater Rome and Greater Britain*, Oxford, 1912, or the Earl of Cromer's *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, London, 1910.

Of course, the bourgeois reformists, and among them particularly the present-day adherents of Kautsky, try to belittle the importance of facts of this kind by arguing that raw materials "could be" obtained in the open market without a "costly and dangerous" colonial policy; and that the supply of raw materials "could be" increased enormously by "simply" improving conditions in agriculture in general. But such arguments become an apology for imperialism, an attempt to paint it in bright colours, because they ignore the principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism: monopolies. The free market is becoming more and more a thing of the past; monopolist syndicates and trusts are restricting it with every passing day, and "simply" improving conditions in agriculture means improving the conditions of the masses, raising wages and reducing profits. Where, except in the imagination of sentimental reformists, are there any trusts capable of concerning themselves with the condition of the masses instead of the conquest of colonies?

Finance capital is interested not only in the already discovered sources of raw materials but also in potential sources, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, and land which is useless today may be improved tomorrow if new methods are devised (to this end a big bank can equip a special expedition of engineers, agricultural experts, etc.), and if large amounts of capital are invested. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of processing up and utilising raw materials, etc., etc. Hence, the inevitable striving of finance capital to enlarge its spheres of influence and even its actual territory. In the same way that the trusts capitalise their property at two or three times its value, taking into account its "potential" (and not actual) profits and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital in general strives to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds in all places, and by every means, taking into account potential sources of raw materials and fearing to be left behind in the fierce struggle for the last remnants of independent territory, or for the repartition of those territories that have been already divided.

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* Schilder, op. cit., S. 38-42.

The British capitalists are exerting every effort to develop cotton growing in *their* colony, Egypt (in 1904, out of 2,300,000 hectares of land under cultivation, 600,000, or more than one-fourth, were under cotton); the Russians are doing the same in *their* colony, Turkestan, because in this way they will be in a better position to defeat their foreign competitors, to monopolise the sources of raw materials and form a more economical and profitable textile trust in which *all* the processes of cotton production and manufacturing will be "combined" and concentrated in the hands of one set of owners.

The interests pursued in exporting capital also give an impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier to employ monopoly methods (and sometimes they are the only methods that can be employed) to eliminate competition, to ensure supplies, to secure the necessary "connections", etc.

The non-economic superstructure which grows up on the basis of finance capital, its politics and its ideology, stimulates the striving for colonial conquest. "Finance capital does not want liberty, it wants domination," as Hilferding very truly says. And a French bourgeois writer, developing and supplementing, as it were, the ideas of Cecil Rhodes quoted above,* writes that social causes should be added to the economic causes of modern colonial policy: "owing to the growing complexities of life and the difficulties which weigh not only on the masses of the workers, but also on the middle classes, 'impatience, irritation and hatred are accumulating in all the countries of the old civilisation and are becoming a menace to public order; the energy which is being hurled out of the definite class channel must be given employment abroad in order to avert an explosion at home'."**

Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the epoch of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its foreign policy, which is the struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of *transitional* forms of state dependence. Not only the two main groups of countries, those owning colonies, and the colonies themselves, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, politically, are formally independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence, are typical of this epoch. We have already referred to one form of dependence—the semi-colony. An example of another is provided by Argentina.

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* See pp. 238-39 of this book.—*Ed.*

** Wahl, *La France aux colonies* quoted by Henri Russier, *Le Partage de l'Océanie*, Paris, 1905, p. 165.

"South America, and especially Argentina," writes Schulze-Gaevernitz in his work on British imperialism, "is so dependent financially on London that it ought to be described as almost a British commercial colony."* Basing himself on the reports of the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Buenos Aires for 1909, Schilder estimated the amount of British capital invested in Argentina at 8,750 million francs. It is not difficult to imagine what strong connections British finance capital (and its faithful "friend", diplomacy) thereby acquires with the Argentine bourgeoisie, with the circles that control the whole of that country's economic and political life.

A somewhat different form of financial and diplomatic dependence, accompanied by political independence, is presented by Portugal. Portugal is an independent sovereign state, but actually, for more than two hundred years, since the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), it has been a British protectorate. Great Britain has protected Portugal and her colonies in order to fortify her own positions in the fight against her rivals, Spain and France. In return Great Britain has received commercial privileges, preferential conditions for importing goods and especially capital into Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, the right to use the ports and islands of Portugal, her telegraph cables, etc., etc.** Relations of this kind have always existed between big and little states, but in the epoch of capitalist imperialism they become a general system, they form part of the sum total of "divide the world" relations and become links in the chain of operations of world finance capital.

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* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel zu Beginn des 20-ten Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1906, S. 318. Sartorius v. Waltershausen says the same in *Das volkswirtschaftliche System der Kapitalanlage im Auslande*, Berlin, 1907, S. 46.

** Schilder, op. cit., Bd. I, S. 160-61.

In order to finish with the question of the division of the world, I must make the following additional observation. This question was raised quite openly and definitely not only in American literature after the Spanish-American War, and in English literature after the Anglo-Boer War, at the very end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth; not only has German literature, which has "most jealously" watched "British imperialism", systematically given its appraisal of this fact. This question has also been raised in French bourgeois literature as definitely and broadly as is thinkable from the bourgeois point of view. Let me quote Driault, the historian, who, in his book, *Political and Social Problems at the End of the Nineteenth Century*, in the chapter "The Great Powers and the Division of the World", wrote the following: "During the past few years, all the free territory of the globe, with the exception of China, has been occupied by the powers of Europe and North America. This has already brought about several conflicts and shifts of spheres of influence, and these foreshadow more terrible upheavals in the near future. For it is necessary to make haste. The nations which have not yet made provision for themselves run the risk of never receiving their share and never participating in the tremendous exploitation of the globe which will be one of the most essential features of the next century [i.e., the twentieth]. That is why all Europe and America have lately been afflicted with the fever of colonial expansion, of 'imperialism', that most noteworthy feature of the end of the nineteenth century." And the author added: "In this partition of the world, in this furious hunt for the treasures and the big markets of the globe, the relative strength of the empires founded in this nineteenth century is totally out of proportion to the place occupied in Europe by the nations which founded them. The dominant powers in Europe, the arbiters of her destiny, are *not* equally preponderant in the whole world. And, as colonial might, the hope of controlling as yet unassessed wealth, will evidently react upon the relative strength of the European powers, the colonial question—'imperialism', if you will—which has already modified the political conditions of Europe itself, will modify them more and more."*

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* J.-E. Driault, *Problèmes politiques et sociaux*, Paris, 1907, p. 299.

VIII. PARASITISM AND DECAY OF CAPITALISM

We now have to examine yet another significant aspect of imperialism to which most of the discussions on the subject usually attach insufficient importance. One of the shortcomings of the Marxist Hilferding is that on this point he has taken a step backward compared with the non-Marxist Hobson. I refer to parasitism, which is characteristic of imperialism.

As we have seen, the deepest economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, i.e., monopoly which has grown out of capitalism and which exists in the general environment of capitalism, commodity production and competition, in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. Nevertheless, like all monopoly, it inevitably engenders a tendency to stagnation and decay. Since monopoly prices are established, even temporarily, the motive cause of technical and, consequently, of all other progress disappears to a certain extent and, further, the *economic* possibility arises of deliberately retarding technical progress. For instance, in America, a certain Owens invented a machine which revolutionised the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle-manufacturing cartel purchased Owens's patent, but pigeon-holed it, refrained from utilising it. Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for a very long period of time, eliminate competition in the world market (and this, by the by, is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is so absurd). Certainly, the possibility of reducing the cost of production and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements operates in the direction of change. But the *tendency* to stagnation and decay, which is characteristic of monopoly, continues to operate, and in some branches of industry, in some countries, for certain periods of time, it gains the upper hand.

The monopoly ownership of very extensive, rich or well-situated colonies, operates in the same direction.

Further, imperialism is an immense accumulation of money capital in a few countries, amounting, as we have seen, to 100,000-150,000 million francs in securities. Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather, of a stratum of rentiers, i.e., people who live by "clipping coupons", who take no part in any enterprise whatever, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies.

"In 1893," writes Hobson, "the British capital invested abroad represented about 15 per cent of the total wealth of the United Kingdom."* Let me remind the reader that by 1915 this capital had increased about two and a half times. "Aggressive imperialism", says Hobson further on, "which costs the tax-payer so dear, which is of so little value to the manufacturer and trader ... is a source of great gain to the investor.... The annual income Great Britain derives from commissions in her whole foreign and colonial trade, import and export, is estimated by Sir R. Giffen at £18,000,000 [nearly 170 million rubles] for 1899, taken at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, upon a turnover of £800,000,000." Great as this sum is, it cannot explain the aggressive imperialism of Great Britain, which is explained by the income of £90 million to £100 million from "invested" capital, the income of the rentiers.

The income of the rentiers is *five times greater* than the income obtained from the foreign trade of the biggest "trading" country in the world! This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism.

For that reason the term "rentier state" (*Rentnerstaat*), or usurer state, is coming into common use in the economic literature that deals with imperialism. The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states and a vast majority of debtor states. "At the top of the list of foreign investments," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "are those placed in politically dependent or allied countries: Great Britain grants loans to Egypt, Japan, China and South America. Her navy plays here the part of bailiff in case of necessity. Great Britain's political power protects her from the indignation of her debtors."** Sartorius von Waltershausen in his book, *The National Economic System of Capital Investments Abroad*, cites Holland as the model "rentier state" and points out that Great Britain and France are now becoming such.* Schilder is of the opinion that five industrial states have become "definitely pronounced creditor countries": Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. He does not include Holland in this list simply because she is "industrially little developed".** The United States is a creditor only of the American countries.

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* Hobson, *Imperialism.*, pp. 59, 60.

** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, S. 320 et seq.

"Great Britain," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is gradually becoming transformed from an industrial into a creditor state. Notwithstanding the absolute increase in industrial output and the export of manufactured goods, there is an increase in the relative importance of income from interest and dividends, issues of securities, commissions and speculation in the whole of the national economy. In my opinion it is precisely this that forms the economic basis of imperialist ascendancy. The creditor is more firmly attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer."*** In regard to Germany, A. Lansburgh, the publisher of the Berlin *Die Bank*, in 1911, in an article entitled "Germany—a Rentier State", wrote the following: "People in Germany are ready to sneer at the yearning to become rentiers that is observed in France. But they forget that as far as the bourgeoisie is concerned the situation in Germany is becoming more and more like that in France."****

The rentier state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism, and this circumstance cannot fail to influence all the socio-political conditions of the countries concerned, in general, and the two fundamental trends in the working-class movement, in particular. To demonstrate this in the clearest possible manner let me quote Hobson, who is a most reliable witness, since he cannot be suspected of leaning towards Marxist orthodoxy; on the other hand, he is an Englishman who is very well acquainted with the situation in the country which is richest in colonies, in finance capital, and in imperialist experience.

With the Anglo-Boer War fresh in his mind, Hobson describes the connection between imperialism and the interests of the "financiers", their growing profits from contracts, supplies, etc., and writes: "While the directors of this definitely parasitic policy are capitalists, the same motives appeal to special classes of the workers. In many towns most important trades are dependent upon government employment or contracts; the imperialism of the metal and shipbuilding centres is attributable in no small degree to this fact." Two sets of circumstances, in this writer's opinion, have weakened the old empires: (1) "economic parasitism", and (2) the formation of armies recruited from subject peoples. "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence." And I shall add that the economic possibility of such bribery, whatever its form may be, requires high monopolist profits.

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* Sartorius von Waltershausen, *Das volkswirtschaftliche System, etc.*, Berlin, 1907, Buch IV.

** Schilder, op. cit., S. 393.

*** Schulze-Gaevernitz, op. cit., S. 122.

**** *Die Bank*, 1911, I, S. 10-11.

As for the second circumstance, Hobson writes: "One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."

Hobson gives the following economic appraisal of the prospect of the partitioning of China: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a larger body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa.... We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western states, a European federation of great powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilisation, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory [it would be better to say: prospect] as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors, and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable; but the influences which govern the imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards some such consummation."*

The author is quite right: *if* the forces of imperialism had not been counteracted they would have led precisely to what he has described. The significance of a "United States of Europe" in the present imperialist situation is correctly appraised. He should have added, however, that, also *within* the working-class movement, the opportunists, who are for the moment victorious in most countries, are "working" systematically and undeviatingly in this very direction. Imperialism, which means the partitioning of the world, and the exploitation of other countries besides China, which means high monopoly profits for a handful of very rich countries, makes it economically possible to bribe the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters, gives shape to, and strengthens opportunism. We must not, however, lose sight of the forces which counteract imperialism in general, and opportunism in particular, and which, naturally, the social-liberal Hobson is unable to perceive.

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* Hobson, op. cit., pp. 103, 205, 144, 335, 386.

The German opportunist, Gerhard Hildebrand, who was once expelled from the Party for defending imperialism, and who could today be a leader of the so-called "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany, supplements Hobson well by his advocacy of a "United States of Western Europe" (without Russia) for the purpose of "joint" action ... against the African Negroes, against the "great Islamic movement", for the maintenance of a "powerful army and navy", against a "Sino-Japanese coalition",* etc.

The description of "British imperialism" in Schulze-Gaevernitz's book reveals the same parasitical traits. The national income of Great Britain approximately doubled from 1865 to 1898, while the income "from abroad" increased *ninefold* in the same period. While the "merit" of imperialism is that it "trains the Negro to habits of industry" (you cannot manage without coercion...), the "danger" of imperialism lies in that "Europe will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then the rougher work in industry—on to the coloured races, and itself be content with the role of rentier, and in this way, perhaps, pave the way for the economic, and later, the political emancipation of the coloured races".

An increasing proportion of land in England is being taken out of cultivation and used for sport, for the diversion of the rich. As far as Scotland—the most aristocratic place for hunting and other sports—is concerned, it is said that "it lives on its past and on Mr. Carnegie" (the American multimillionaire). On horse racing and fox hunting alone England annually spends £14,000,000 (nearly 130 million rubles). The number of rentiers in England is about one million. The percentage of the productively employed population to the total population is declining:

	Population England and Wales (000, 000)	Workers in basic industries (000,000)	Per cent of total population
851	17.9	4.1	23
1901	32.5	4.9	15

And in speaking of the British working class the bourgeois student of "British imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century" is obliged to distinguish systematically between the "*upper stratum*" of the workers and the "*lower stratum of the proletariat proper*". The upper stratum furnishes the bulk of the membership of co-operatives, of trade unions, of sporting clubs and of numerous religious sects. To this level is adapted the electoral system, which in Great Britain is still "*sufficiently restricted to exclude the lower stratum of the proletariat proper*"! In order to present the condition of the British working class in a rosy light, only this upper stratum—which constitutes a *minority* of the proletariat—is usually spoken of. For instance, "the problem of unemployment is mainly a London problem and that of the lower proletarian stratum, *to which the politicians attach little importance...* ".* He should have said: to which the bourgeois politicians and the "socialist" opportunists attach little importance.

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* Gerhard Hildebrand, *Die Erschütterung der Industrieherrschaft und des Industriesozialismus*, 1910, S. 229 et seq.

One of the special features of imperialism connected with the facts I am describing, is the decline in emigration from imperialist countries and the increase in immigration into these countries from the more backward countries where lower wages are paid. As Hobson observes, emigration from Great Britain has been declining since 1884. In that year the number of emigrants was 242,000, while in 1900, the number was 169,000. Emigration from Germany reached the highest point between 1881 and 1890, with a total of 1,453,000 emigrants. In the course of the following two decades, it fell to 544,000 and to 341,000. On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of workers entering Germany from Austria, Italy, Russia and other countries. According to the 1907 census, there were 1,342,294 foreigners in Germany, of whom 440,800 were industrial workers and 257,329 agricultural workers.** In France, the workers employed in the mining industry are, "in great part", foreigners: Poles, Italians and Spaniards.*** In the United States, immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are engaged in the most poorly paid jobs, while American workers provide the highest percentage of overseers or of the better-paid workers.**** Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections also among the workers, and to detach them from the broad masses of the proletariat.

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* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, S. 301.

** *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, Bd. 211.

*** Henger, *Die Kapitalsanlage der Franzözen*, Stuttgart, 1913.

**** Hourwich, *Immigration and Labour*, New York, 1913.

It must be observed that in Great Britain the tendency of imperialism to split the workers, to strengthen opportunism among them and to cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, revealed itself much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries; for two important distinguishing features of imperialism were already observed in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century—vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in the world market. Marx and Engels traced this connection between opportunism in the working-class movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism systematically, during the course of several decades. For example, on October 7, 1858, Engels wrote to Marx: "The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." Almost a quarter of a century later, in a letter dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks of the "worst English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by, the middle class". In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies."* (Engels expressed similar ideas in the press in his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, which appeared in 1892.)

This clearly shows the causes and effects. The causes are: (1) exploitation of the whole world by this country; (2) its monopolist position in the world market; (3) its colonial monopoly. The effects are: (1) a section of the British proletariat becomes bourgeois; (2) a section of the proletariat allows itself to be led by men bought by, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie. The imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the division of the world among a handful of states, each of which today exploits (in the sense of drawing superprofits from) a part of the "whole world" only a little smaller than that which England exploited in 1858; each of them occupies a monopolist position in the world market thanks to trusts, cartels, finance capital and creditor and debtor relations; each of them enjoys to some degree a colonial monopoly (we have seen that out of the total of 75,000,000 sq. km., which comprise the *whole* colonial world, *65,000,000* sq. km., or 86 per cent, belong to six powers; *61,000,000* sq. km., or 81 per cent, belong to three powers).

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* *Briefwechsel von Marx und Engels*, Bd. II, S. 290; IV, 433.—Karl Kautsky, *Sozialismus und Kolonialpolitik*, Berlin, 1907, S. 79; this pamphlet was written by Kautsky in those infinitely distant days when he was still a Marxist.

The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of such economic and political conditions that are bound to increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and vital interests of the working-class movement: imperialism has grown from an embryo into the predominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed; on the other hand, instead of the undivided monopoly of Great Britain, we see a few imperialist powers contending for the right to share in this monopoly, and this struggle is characteristic of the whole period of the early twentieth century. Opportunism cannot now be completely triumphant in the working-class movement of one country for decades as it was in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century; but in a number of countries it has grown ripe, overripe, and rotten, and has become completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of social-chauvinism.*

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[*] Russian social-chauvinism in its overt form, represented by the Potresovs, Chkhenkelis, Maslovs, etc., and in its covert form (Chkheidze, Skobelev, Axelrod, Martov, etc.), also emerged from the Russian variety of opportunism, namely, liquidationism.[97]

From THE DISCUSSION ON SELF-DETERMINATION SUMMED UP

10. THE IRISH REBELLION OF 1916

Our theses[98] were written before the outbreak of this rebellion, which must be the touchstone of our theoretical views.

The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the vitality of small nations oppressed by imperialism has already been sapped, that they cannot play any role against imperialism, that support of their purely national aspirations will lead to nothing, etc. The imperialist war of 1914-16 has provided *facts* which refute such conclusions.

The war proved to be an epoch of crisis for the West-European nations, and for imperialism as a whole. Every crisis discards the conventionalities, tears away the outer wrappings, sweeps away the obsolete and reveals the underlying springs and forces. What has it revealed from the standpoint of the movement of oppressed nations? In the colonies there have been a number of attempts at rebellion, which the oppressor nations, naturally, did all they could to hide by means of a military censorship. Nevertheless, it is known that in Singapore the British brutally suppressed a mutiny among their Indian troops; that there were attempts at rebellion in French Annam (see *Nashe Slovo*) and in the German Cameroons (see the Junius pamphlet*); that in Europe, on the one hand, there was a rebellion in Ireland, which the "freedom-loving" English, who did not dare to extend conscription to Ireland, suppressed by executions, and, on the other, the Austrian Government passed the death sentence on the deputies of the Czech Diet "for treason", and shot whole Czech regiments for the same "crime".

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* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 305-19.—*Ed.*

This list is, of course, far from complete. Nevertheless, it proves that, *owing* to the crisis of imperialism, the flames of national revolt have flared up *both* in the colonies and in Europe, and that national sympathies and antipathies have manifested themselves in spite of the Draconian threats and measures of repression. All this before the crisis of imperialism hit its peak; the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie was yet to be undermined (this may be brought about by a war of "attrition" but has not yet happened) and the proletarian movements in the imperialist countries were still very feeble. What will happen when the war has caused complete exhaustion, or when, in one state at least, the power of the bourgeoisie has been shaken under the blows of proletarian struggle, as that of tsarism in 1905?

On May 9, 1916, there appeared in *Berner Tagwacht*, the organ of the Zimmerwald group, including some of the Leftists, an article on the Irish rebellion entitled "Their Song Is Over" and signed with the initials K. R. It described the Irish rebellion as being nothing more nor less than a "putsch", for, as the author argued, "the Irish question was an agrarian one", the peasants had been pacified by reforms, and the nationalist movement remained only a "purely urban, petty-bourgeois movement, which, notwithstanding the sensation it caused, had not much social backing".

It is not surprising that this monstrously doctrinaire and pedantic assessment coincided with that of a Russian national-liberal Cadet, Mr. A. Kulisher (*Rech* No. 102, April 15, 1916), who also labelled the rebellion "the Dublin putsch".

It is to be hoped that, in accordance with the adage, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", many comrades, who were not aware of the morass they were sinking into by repudiating "self-determination" and by treating the national movements of small nations with disdain, will have their eyes opened by the "accidental" coincidence of opinion held by a Social-Democrat and a representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie!!

The term "putsch", in its scientific sense, may be employed only when the attempt at insurrection has revealed nothing but a circle of conspirators or stupid maniacs, and has aroused no sympathy among the masses. The centuries-old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interest, manifested itself, in particular, in a mass Irish National Congress in America (*Vorwärts*, March 20, 1916) which called for Irish independence; it also manifested itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie *and a section of the workers* after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations, suppression of newspapers, etc. Whoever calls *such* a rebellion a "putsch" is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon.

To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.—to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*. So one army lines up in one place and says, "We are for socialism", and another, somewhere else and says, "We are for imperialism", and that will be a social revolution! Only those who hold such a ridiculously pedantic view could vilify the Irish rebellion by calling it a "putsch".

Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of battles in which *all* the discontented classes, groups and elements of the population participated. Among these there were masses imbued with the crudest prejudices, with the vaguest and most fantastic aims of struggle; there were small groups which accepted Japanese money, there were speculators and adventurers, etc. But *objectively*, the mass movement was breaking the back of tsarism and paving the way for democracy; for this reason the class-conscious workers led it.

The socialist revolution in Europe *cannot be* anything other than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry oppressed and discontented elements. Inevitably, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will participate in it—without such participation, *mass* struggle is *impossible*, without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley and outwardly fragmented mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, capture power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which all hate (though for different reasons!), and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no means immediately "purge" itself of petty-bourgeois slag.

Social-Democracy, we read in the Polish theses[99] (I, 4), "must utilise the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie against European imperialism *in order to sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe*". (Authors' italics.)

Is it not clear that it is least of all permissible to contrast Europe to the colonies in *this* respect? The struggle of the oppressed nations *in Europe*, a struggle capable of going all the way to insurrection and street fighting, capable of breaking down the iron discipline of the army and martial law, will "sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe" to an infinitely greater degree than a much more developed rebellion in a remote colony. A blow delivered against the power of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland is a hundred times more significant politically than a blow of equal force delivered in Asia or in Africa.

The French chauvinist press recently reported the publication in Belgium of the eightieth issue of an illegal journal, *Free Belgium*. Of course, the chauvinist press of France very often lies, but this piece of news seems to be true. Whereas chauvinist and Kautskyite German Social-Democracy has failed to establish a free press for itself during the two years of war, and has meekly borne the yoke of military censorship (only the Left Radical elements, to their credit be it said, have published pamphlets and manifestos, in spite of the censorship)—an oppressed civilised nation has reacted to a military oppression unparalleled in ferocity by establishing an organ of revolutionary protest! The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the *real* anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene.

The general staffs in the current war are doing their utmost to utilise any national and revolutionary movement in the enemy camp: the Germans utilise the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. They are acting quite correctly from their own point of view. A serious war would not be treated seriously if advantage were not taken of the enemy's slightest weakness and if every opportunity that presented itself were not seized upon, the more so since it is impossible to know beforehand at what moment, where, and with what force some powder magazine will "explode". We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the proletariat's great war of liberation for socialism, we did not know how to utilise *every* popular movement against *every single* disaster imperialism brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to repeat in a thousand keys the declaration that we are "opposed" to all national oppression and, on the other, to describe the heroic revolt of the most mobile and enlightened section of certain classes in an oppressed nation against its oppressors as a "putsch", we should be sinking to the same level of stupidity as the Kautskyites.

It is the misfortune of the Irish that they rose prematurely, before the European revolt of the proletariat had *had time* to mature. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various sources of rebellion can immediately merge of their own accord, without reverses and defeats. On the other hand, the very fact that revolts do break out at different times, in different places, and are of different kinds, guarantees wide scope and depth to the general movement; but it is only in premature, individual, sporadic and therefore unsuccessful, revolutionary movements that the masses gain experience, acquire knowledge, gather strength, and get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for the general onslaught, just as certain strikes, demonstrations, local and national, mutinies in the army, outbreaks among the peasantry, etc., prepared the way for the general onslaught in 1905.

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pp. 353-58

From A CARICATURE OF MARXISM AND IMPERIALIST ECONOMISM

Our theses[100] (§6) state that to be concrete not less than *three* different types of countries must be distinguished when dealing with self-determination. (It was clearly impossible to discuss each separate country in general theses.) First type: the advanced countries of Western Europe (and America), where the national movement is a thing of the *past*. Second type: Eastern Europe, where it is a thing of the *present*. Third type: semi-colonies and colonies, where it is largely a thing of the *future*.*

Is this correct or not? *This* is what Kievsky should have levelled his criticism at. But he does not see the *essence* of the theoretical problems! He fails to see that unless he refutes the above-mentioned proposition (in §6) of our theses—and it cannot be refuted because it is correct—his disquisitions about the "era" resemble a man brandishing his sword but striking no blows.

> "In contrast to V. Ilyin's[101] opinion," he writes at the end of his article, "we assume that for the majority [!] of Western [!] countries the national problem has not been settled.... "

And so, the national movements of the French, Spaniards, English, Dutch, Germans and Italians were not consummated in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and earlier? At the beginning of the article the concept "era of imperialism" is distorted to make it appear that the national movement has been consummated in general, and not only in the advanced Western countries. At the end of the same article the "national problem" is declared "not settled" in *precisely* the Western countries!! Is that not a muddle?

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* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 150-52.—*Ed.*

In the Western countries the national movement is a thing of the distant past. In England, France, Germany, etc., the "fatherland" is a dead letter, it has played its historical role, *i.e.*, the national movement cannot yield here anything progressive, anything that will elevate new masses to a new economic and political life. History's next step here is not transition from feudalism or from patriarchal savagery to national progress, to a cultured and politically free fatherland, but transition from a "fatherland" that has outlived its day, that is capitalistically overripe, to socialism.

The position is different in Eastern Europe. As far as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, for instance, are concerned, only a Martian dreamer could deny that the national movement has not yet been consummated there, that the awakening of the masses to the full use of their mother tongue and literature (and this is an absolute condition and concomitant of the full development of capitalism, of the full penetration of exchange to the very last peasant family) is *still* going on there. The "fatherland" is historically not *yet* quite a dead letter there. There the "defence of the fatherland" can *still* be defence of democracy, of one's native language, of political liberty against oppressor nations, against medievalism, whereas the English, French, Germans and Italians lie when they speak of defending their fatherland in the present war, because actually what they are defending is *not* their native language, *not* their right to national development, but their rights as slave-holders, their colonies, the foreign "spheres of influence" of their finance capital, etc.

In the semi-colonies and colonies the national movement is, historically, still younger than in Eastern Europe.

. . . .

Running through the article is Kievsky's basic doubt: why advocate and, when we are in power, implement the freedom of nations to *secede*, considering that the trend of development is towards the *merging* of nations? For the same reason—we reply—that we advocate and, when in power, will implement the dictatorship of the proletariat, though the entire trend of development is towards abolition of coercive domination of one part of society over another. Dictatorship is domination of one part of society over the rest of society, and domination, moreover, that rests directly on coercion. Dictatorship of the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class, is necessary to overthrow the bourgeoisie and repel its attempts at counter-revolution. The question of proletarian dictatorship is of such overriding importance that he who denies the need for such dictatorship, or recognises it only in words, cannot be a member of the Social-Democratic Party. However, it cannot be denied that in individual cases, by way of exception, for instance, in some small country after the social revolution has been accomplished in a neighbouring big country, peaceful surrender of power by the bourgeoisie is *possible*, if it is convinced that resistance is hopeless and if it prefers to save its skin. It is much more likely, of course, that even in small states socialism will *not* be achieved without civil war, and for that reason the *only* programme of international Social-Democracy must be recognition of civil war, though violence is, of course, alien to our ideals. The same, *mutatis mutandis* (with the *necessary* alterations), is applicable to nations. We favour their merger, but *now* there can be no transition from forcible merger and annexation to voluntary merger without freedom of secession. We recognise—and quite rightly—the predominance of the economic factor, but to interpret it *à la* Kievsky is to make a caricature of Marxism. Even the trusts and banks of modern imperialism, though inevitable everywhere as part of developed capitalism, differ in their concrete aspects from country to country. There is a still greater difference, despite homogeneity in essentials, between political forms in the advanced imperialist countries—America, England, France, Germany. The same variety will manifest itself also in the path mankind will follow from the imperialism of today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow. All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint, "in the name of historical materialism", *this* aspect of the future in a monotonous grey. The result will be nothing more than Suzdal daubing. And even if reality were to show that *prior* to the first victory of the socialist proletariat only 1/500 of the nations now oppressed will win emancipation and secede, that *prior* to the final victory of the socialist proletariat the world over (i.e., during all the vicissitudes of the socialist revolution) also only 1/500 of the oppressed nations will secede for a very short time—*even* in that event we would be correct, both from the theoretical and practical political standpoint, in advising the workers, already now, not to permit into their Social-Democratic parties those socialists of the oppressor nations who do not recognise and do not advocate freedom of secession for *all* oppressed nations. For the fact is that we do not know, and cannot know, how many of the oppressed nations will in practice require secession in order to contribute something of their own to the different *forms* of democracy, the different *forms* of transition to socialism. And that the negation of freedom of secession now is theoretically false from beginning to end and in practice amounts to servility to the chauvinists of the oppressing nations—this we know, see and feel daily.

Written in August-October 1916 First published in the magazine *Zvezda* Nos. 1 and 2, 1924	*Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 38-40, 68-70

From THE "DISARMAMENT" SLOGAN

P.S. In the last issue of the English *Socialist Review* (September 1916), organ of the opportunist Independent Labour Party, we find, on page 287, the resolution of the party's Newcastle Conference—refusal to support *any* war waged by *any* government even if "nominally" it is a war of "defence". And in an editorial on page 205 of the same issue we read the following declaration: "In no degree do we approve the Sinn Fein rebellion [the Irish rebellion of 1916]. We do not approve armed rebellion at all, any more than any other form of militarism and war."

Is there any need to prove that *these* "anti-militarists", that *such* advocates of disarmament, not in a small, but in a big country, are the most pernicious opportunists? And yet, theoretically, they are quite right in regarding insurrection as one "form" of militarism and war.

Written in October 1916
Published in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata* No. 2, December 1916

Collected Works, Vol. 23, p. 104

IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM

Is there any connection between imperialism and the monstrous and disgusting victory opportunism (in the form of social-chauvinism) has gained over the labour movement in Europe?

This is the fundamental question of modern socialism. And having in our Party literature fully established, first, the imperialist character of our era and of the present war, and, second, the inseparable historical connection between social-chauvinism and opportunism, as well as the intrinsic similarity of their political ideology, we can and must proceed to analyse this fundamental question.

We have to begin with as precise and full a definition of imperialism as possible. Imperialism is a specific historical stage of capitalism. Its specific character is three-fold: imperialism is (1) monopoly capitalism; (2) parasitic, or decaying capitalism; (3) moribund capitalism. The supplanting of free competition by monopoly is the fundamental economic feature, the *quintessence* of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in five principal forms: (1) cartels, syndicates and trusts—the concentration of production has reached a degree which gives rise to these monopolistic associations of capitalists; (2) the monopolistic position of the big banks—three, four or five giant banks manipulate the whole economic life of America, France, Germany; (3) seizure of the sources of *raw material* by the trusts and the financial oligarchy (finance capital is monopoly industrial capital merged with bank capital); (4) the (economic) partition of the world by the international cartels has *begun*. There are already over *one hundred* such international cartels, which command the *entire* world market and divide it "amicably" among themselves—until war *re*divides it. The export of capital, as distinct from the export of commodities under non-monopoly capitalism, is a highly characteristic phenomenon and is closely linked with the economic and territorial-political partition of the world; (5) the territorial partition of the world (colonies) *is completed.*

Imperialism, as the highest stage of capitalism in America and Europe, and later in Asia, took final shape in the period 1898-1914. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and the economic crisis in Europe in 1900 are the chief historical landmarks in the new era of world history.

The fact that imperialism is parasitic or decaying capitalism is manifested first of all in the tendency to decay, which is characteristic of *every* monopoly under the system of private ownership of the means of production. The difference between the democratic-republican and the reactionary-monarchist imperialist bourgeoisie is obliterated precisely because they are both rotting alive (which by no means precludes an extraordinarily rapid development of capitalism in individual branches of industry, in individual countries, and in individual periods). Secondly, the decay of capitalism is manifested in the creation of a huge stratum of *rentiers*, capitalists who live by "clipping coupons". In each of the four leading imperialist countries—England, U.S.A., France and Germany—capital in securities amounts to 100,000 or 150,000 *million* francs, from which each country derives an annual income of no less than five to eight thousand million. Thirdly, export of capital is parasitism raised to a high pitch. Fourthly, "finance capital strives for domination, not freedom". Political reaction *all along* the line is a characteristic feature of imperialism. Corruption, bribery on a huge scale and all kinds of fraud. Fifthly, the exploitation of oppressed nations—which is inseparably connected with annexations—and especially the exploitation of colonies by a handful of "Great" Powers, increasingly transforms the "civilised" world into a parasite on the body of hundreds of millions in the uncivilised nations. The Roman proletarian lived at the expense of society. Modern society lives at the expense of the modern proletarian. Marx specially stressed this profound observation of Sismondi.[102] Imperialism somewhat changes the situation. A privileged upper stratum of the proletariat in the imperialist countries lives partly at the expense of hundreds of millions in the uncivilised nations.

It is clear why imperialism is *moribund* capitalism, capitalism in *transition* to socialism: monopoly, which grows *out of* capitalism, is *already* dying capitalism, the beginning of its transition to socialism. The tremendous *socialisation* of labour by imperialism (what its apologists—the bourgeois economists—call "interlocking") produces the same result.

Advancing this definition of imperialism brings us into complete contradiction to K. Kautsky, who refuses to regard imperialism as a "phase of capitalism" and defines it as a *policy* "preferred" by finance capital, a tendency of "industrial" countries to annex "agrarian" countries.* Kautsky's definition is thoroughly false from the theoretical standpoint. What distinguishes imperialism is the rule *not* of industrial capital, but of finance capital, the striving to annex *not* agrarian countries particularly, but *every kind* of country. Kautsky *divorces* imperialist politics from imperialist economics, he divorces monopoly in politics from monopoly in economics in order to pave the way for his vulgar bourgeois reformism, such as "disarmament", "ultra-imperialism" and similar nonsense. The whole purpose and significance of this theoretical falsity is to obscure the *most profound* contradictions of imperialism and thus justify the theory of "unity" with the apologists of imperialism, the outright social-chauvinists and opportunists.

We have dealt at sufficient length with Kautsky's break with Marxism on this point in *Sotsial-Demokrat* and *Kommunist*. Our Russian Kautskyites, the supporters of the Organising Committee (O.C.), headed by Axelrod and Spectator, including even Martov, and to a large degree Trotsky, preferred to maintain a discreet silence on the question of Kautskyism as a trend. They did not dare defend Kautsky's war-time writings, confining themselves simply to praising Kautsky (Axelrod in his German pamphlet, which the Organising Committee has *promised* to publish in Russian) or to quoting Kautsky's private letters (Spectator), in which he says he belongs to the opposition and jesuitically tries to nullify his chauvinist declarations.

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* "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to subjugate and annex ever larger *agrarian* territories, irrespective of the nations that inhabit them" (Kautsky in *Die Neue Zeit*, September 11, 1914).

It should be noted that Kautsky's "conception" of imperialism—which is tantamount to embellishing imperialism—is a retrogression not only compared with Hilferding's *Finance Capital* (no matter how assiduously Hilferding now defends Kautsky and "unity" with the social-chauvinists!) but also compared with the *social-liberal* J. A. Hobson. This English economist, who in no way claims to be a Marxist, defines imperialism, and reveals its contradictions, much more profoundly in a book published in 1902*. This is what Hobson (in whose book may be found nearly all Kautsky's pacifist and "conciliatory" banalities) wrote on the highly important question of the parasitic nature of imperialism:

Two sets of circumstances, in Hobson's opinion, weakened the power of the old empires: (1) "economic parasitism", and (2) formation of armies from dependent peoples. "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence." Concerning the second circumstance, Hobson writes:

> "One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism [this song about the "blindness" of imperialists comes more appropriately from the social-liberal Hobson than from the "Marxist" Kautsky] is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France, and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."
>
> The prospect of partitioning China elicited from Hobson the following economic appraisal: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a larger body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods: all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and semi-manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia

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* J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism*, London, 1902.

> and Africa.... We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western states, a European federation of Great Powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilisation, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory [he should have said: prospect] as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors [rentiers] and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable; but the influences which govern the imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards such a consummation."

Hobson, the social-liberal, fails to see that this "counteraction" can be offered *only* by the revolutionary proletariat and *only* in the form of a social revolution. But then he is a social-liberal! Nevertheless, as early as 1902 he had an excellent insight into the meaning and significance of a "United States of Europe" (be it said for the benefit of Trotsky the Kautskyite!) and of all that is now being glossed over by the *hypocritical Kautskyites* of various countries, namely, that the *opportunists* (social-chauvinists) are working hand in glove with the imperialist bourgeoisie *precisely* towards creating an imperialist Europe on the backs of Asia and Africa, and that objectively the *opportunists* are a section of the petty bourgeoisie and of certain strata of the working class who *have been bribed* out of imperialist superprofits and converted into *watchdogs* of capitalism and *corrupters* of the labour movement.

Both in articles and in the resolutions of our Party, we have repeatedly pointed to this most profound connection, the economic connection, between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the opportunism which has triumphed (for long?) in the labour movement. And from this, incidentally, we concluded that a split with the social-chauvinists was inevitable. Our Kautskyites preferred to evade the question! Martov, for instance, uttered in his lectures a sophistry which in the *Bulletin of the Organising Committee Secretariat Abroad* (No. 4, April 10, 1916) is expressed as follows:

> "...The cause of revolutionary Social-Democracy would be in a sad, indeed hopeless, plight if those groups of workers who in mental development approach most closely to the 'intelligentsia' and who are the most highly skilled fatally drifted away from it towards opportunism... ."

By means of the silly word "fatally" and a certain sleight-of-hand, the *fact* is *evaded* that *certain* groups of workers *have already drifted away* to opportunism and to the imperialist bourgeoisie! And that is the very fact the sophists of the O.C. want to *evade*! They confine themselves to the "official optimism" the Kautskyite Hilferding and many others now flaunt: objective conditions guarantee the unity of the proletariat and the victory of the revolutionary trend! We, forsooth, are "optimists" with regard to the proletariat!

But in reality all these Kautskyites—Hilferding, the O.C. supporters, Martov and Co.—are *optimists*... with regard to *opportunism*. That is the whole point!

The proletariat is the child of capitalism—of world capitalism, and not only of European capitalism, or of imperialist capitalism. On a world scale, fifty years sooner or fifty years later—measured on a *world* scale this is a minor point—the "proletariat" of course "will be" united, and revolutionary Social-Democracy will "inevitably" be victorious within it. But that is not the point, Messrs. Kautskyites. The point is that at the present time, in the imperialist countries of Europe, *you are fawning* on the opportunists, who are *alien* to the proletariat as a class, who are the servants, the agents of the bourgeoisie and the vehicles of its influence, and *unless* the labour movement *rids* itself of them, it will remain a *bourgeois labour movement*. By advocating "unity" with the opportunists, with the Legiens and Davids, the Plekhanovs, the Chkhenkelis and Potresovs, etc., you are, objectively, defending the *enslavement* of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie with the aid of its best agents in the labour movement. The victory of revolutionary Social-Democracy on a world scale is absolutely inevitable, only it is moving and will move, is proceeding and will proceed, *against* you, it will be a victory *over* you.

These two trends, one might even say *two* parties, in the present-day labour movement, which in 1914-16 so obviously parted ways all over the world, were *traced by Engels and*

Marx in England throughout the course of *decades*, roughly from 1858 to 1892.

Neither Marx nor Engels lived to see the imperialist epoch of world capitalism, which began not earlier than 1898-1900. But it has been a peculiar feature of England that even in the middle of the nineteenth century she already revealed at least *two* major distinguishing features of imperialism: (1) vast colonies, and (2) monopoly profit (due to her monopoly position in the world market). In both respects England at that time was an exception among capitalist countries, and Engels and Marx, analysing this exception, quite clearly and definitely indicated its *connection* with the (temporary) victory of opportunism in the English labour movement.

In a letter to Marx, dated October 7, 1858, Engels wrote: "...The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." In a letter to Sorge, dated September 21, 1872, Engels informs him that Hales kicked up a big row in the Federal Council of the International and secured a vote of censure on Marx for saying that "the English labour leaders had sold themselves". Marx wrote to Sorge on August 4, 1874: "As to the urban workers here [in England], it is a pity that the whole pack of leaders did not get into Parliament. This would be the surest way of getting rid of the whole lot." In a letter to Marx, dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks about "those very worst English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie". In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies."

On December 7, 1889, Engels wrote to Sorge: "The most repulsive thing here [in England] is the bourgeois 'respectability', which has grown deep into the bones of the workers.... Even Tom Mann, whom I regard as the best of the lot, is fond of mentioning that he will be lunching with the Lord Mayor. If one compares this with the French, one realises what a revolution is good for, after all." In a letter, dated April 19, 1890: "But *under* the surface the movement [of the working class in England] is going on, is embracing ever wider sections and mostly just among the hitherto stagnant *lowest* [Engels's italics] strata.The day is no longer far off when this mass *will* suddenly *find itself*, when it will dawn upon it that it itself is this colossal mass in motion." On March 4, 1891: "The failure of the collapsed Dockers' Union; the 'old' conservative trade unions, *rich* and therefore cowardly, remain lone on the field...." September 14, 1891: at the Newcastle Trade Union Congress the old unionists, opponents of the eight-hour day, were defeated "and the bourgeois papers recognise the defeat of the *bourgeois labour party*" (Engels's italics throughout)....

That these ideas, which were repeated by Engels over the course of decades, were also expressed by him publicly, in the press, is proved by his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1892. Here he speaks of an "aristocracy among the working class", of a "privileged minority of the workers", in contradistinction to the "great mass of working people". "A small, privileged, protected minority" of the working class alone was "permanently benefited" by the privileged position of England in 1848-68, whereas "the great bulk of them experienced at best but a temporary improvement".... "With the break-down of that [England's industrial] monopoly, the English working class will lose that privileged position...." The members of the "new" unions, the unions of the unskilled workers, "had this immense advantage, that their minds were virgin soil, entirely free from the inherited 'respectable' bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better situated 'old unionists'".... "The so-called workers' representatives" in England are people "who are forgiven their being members of the working class because they themselves would like to drown their quality of being workers in the ocean of their liberalism"....

We have deliberately quoted the direct statements of Marx and Engels at rather great length in order that the reader may study them *as a whole*. And they should be studied, they are worth carefully pondering over. For they are the *pivot* of the tactics in the labour movement that are dictated by the objective conditions of the imperialist era.

Here, too, Kautsky has tried to "befog the issue" and substitute for Marxism sentimental conciliation with the opportunists. Arguing against the avowed and naïve social-imperialists (men like Lensch) who justify Germany's participation in the war as a means of destroying England's monopoly, Kautsky "*corrects*" this obvious falsehood by another equally obvious falsehood. Instead of a cynical falsehood he employs a suave falsehood! The *industrial* monopoly of England, he says, has long ago been broken, has long ago been destroyed, and there is nothing left to destroy.

Why is this argument false?

Because, firstly, it overlooks England's *colonial* monopoly. Yet Engels, as we have seen, pointed to this very clearly as early as 1882, thirty-four years ago! Although England's industrial monopoly may have been destroyed, her colonial monopoly not only remains, but has become extremely accentuated, for the whole world is already divided up! By means of this suave lie Kautsky smuggles in the bourgeois-pacifist and opportunist-philistine idea that "there is nothing to fight about". On the contrary, not only have the *capitalists* something to fight about now, but they *cannot help* fighting if they want to preserve capitalism, for without a forcible redivision of colonies the *new* imperialist countries cannot obtain the privileges enjoyed by the older (*and weaker*) imperialist powers.

Secondly, why does England's monopoly explain the (temporary) victory of opportunism in England? Because monopoly yields *superprofits*, i.e., a surplus of profits over and above the capitalist profits that are normal and customary all over the world. The capitalists *can* devote a part (and not a small one, at that!) of these superprofits to bribe *their own* workers, to create something like an alliance (recall the celebrated "alliances" described by the Webbs of English trade unions and employers) between the workers of the given nation and their capitalists *against* the other countries. England's industrial monopoly was already destroyed by the end of the nineteenth century. That is beyond dispute. But *how* did this destruction take place? Did *all* monopoly disappear?

If that were so, Kautsky's "theory" of conciliation (with the opportunists) would to a certain extent be justified. But it is *not* so, and that is just the point. Imperialism *is* monopoly capitalism. Every cartel, trust, syndicate, every giant bank *is* a monopoly. Superprofits have not disappeared; they still remain. The exploitation of *all* other countries by one privileged, financially wealthy country remains and has become more intense. A handful of wealthy countries—there are only four of them, if we mean independent, really gigantic, "modern" wealth: England, France, the United States and Germany—have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain *super*profits running into hundreds, if not thousands, of millions, they "ride on the backs" of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people in other countries and fight among themselves for the division of the particularly rich, particularly fat and particularly easy spoils.

This, in fact, is the economic and political essence of imperialism, the profound contradictions of which Kautsky glosses over instead of exposing.

The bourgeoisie of an imperialist "Great" Power *can economically* bribe the upper strata of "its" workers by spending on this a hundred million or so francs a year, for its *super*profits most likely amount to about a thousand million. And how this little sop is divided among the labour ministers, "labour representatives" (remember Engels's splendid analysis of the term), labour members of war industries committees, labour officials, workers belonging to the narrow craft unions, office employees, etc., etc., is a secondary question.

Between 1848 and 1868, and to a certain extent even later, only England enjoyed a monopoly: *that is why* opportunism could prevail there for decades. *No* other countries possessed either very rich colonies or an industrial monopoly.

The last third of the nineteenth century saw the transition to the new, imperialist era. Finance capital *not* of one, but of several, though very few, Great Powers enjoys a monopoly. (In Japan and Russia the monopoly of military power, vast territories, or special facilities for robbing minority nationalities, China, etc., partly supplements, partly takes the place of, the monopoly of modern, up-to-date finance capital.) This difference explains why England's monopoly position *could* remain *unchallenged* for decades. The monopoly of modern finance capital is being frantically challenged;

the era of imperialist wars has begun. It was possible in those days to bribe and corrupt the working class of *one* country for decades. This is now improbable, if not impossible. But on the other hand, *every* imperialist "Great" Power can and does bribe *smaller* strata (than in England in 1848-68) of the "labour aristocracy". Formerly a "*bourgeois labour party*", to use Engels's remarkably profound expression, could arise only in one country, because it alone enjoyed a monopoly, but, on the other hand, it could exist for a long time. Now, a "*bourgeois labour party*" *is inevitable* and typical in *all* imperialist countries; but in view of the desperate struggle they are waging for the division of spoils, it is improbable that such a party can prevail for long in a number of countries. For the trusts, the financial oligarchy, high prices, etc., while *enabling* the bribery of a handful in the top layers, are increasingly oppressing, crushing, ruining and torturing the *mass* of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat.

On the one hand, there is the tendency of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists to convert a handful of very rich and privileged nations into "eternal" parasites on the body of the rest of mankind, to "rest on the laurels" of the exploitation of Negroes, Indians, etc., keeping them in subjection with the aid of the excellent weapons of extermination provided by modern militarism. On the other hand, there is the tendency of the *masses*, who are more oppressed than before and who bear the whole brunt of imperialist wars, to cast off this yoke and to overthrow the bourgeoisie. It is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop. For the first tendency is not accidental; it is "substantiated" economically. In *all* countries the bourgeoisie has already begotten, fostered and secured for itself "bourgeois labour parties" of social-chauvinists. The difference between a definitely formed party, like Bissolati's in Italy, for example, which is fully social-imperialist, and, say, the semi-formed near-party of the Potresovs, Gvozdyovs, Bulkins, Chkheidzes, Skobelevs and Co., is an immaterial difference. The important thing is that, economically, the desertion of a stratum of the labour aristocracy to the bourgeoisie has matured and become an accomplished fact; and this economic fact, this shift in class relations, will find political form, in one shape or another, without any particular "difficulty".

On the economic basis referred to above, the political institutions of modern capitalism—press, parliament, associations, congresses, etc.—have created *political* privileges and sops for the respectful, meek, reformist and patriotic office employees and workers, corresponding to the economic privileges and sops. Lucrative and soft jobs in the government or on the war industries committees, in parliament and on diverse committees, on the editorial staffs of "respectable", legally published newspapers or on the management councils of no less respectable and "bourgeois law-abiding" trade unions—this is the bait by which the imperialist bourgeoisie attracts and rewards the representatives and supporters of the "bourgeois labour parties".

The mechanics of political democracy works in the same direction. Nothing in our times can be done without elections; nothing can be done without the masses. And in this era of printing and parliamentarism it is *impossible* to gain the following of the masses without a widely ramified, systematically managed, well-equipped system of flattery, lies, fraud, juggling with fashionable and popular catchwords, and promising all manner of reforms and blessings to the workers right and left—as long as they renounce the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. I would call this system Lloyd-Georgism, after the English Minister Lloyd George, one of the foremost and most dexterous representatives of this system in the classic land of the "bourgeois labour party". A first-class bourgeois manipulator, an astute politician, a popular orator who will deliver any speeches you like, even r-r-revolutionary ones, to a labour audience, and a man who is capable of obtaining sizable sops for docile workers in the shape of social reforms (insurance, etc.), Lloyd George serves the bourgeoisie splendidly,* and serves it precisely *among* the workers, brings its influence *precisely* to the proletariat, to where the bourgeoisie needs it most and where it finds it most difficult to subject the masses morally.

And is there such a great difference between Lloyd George and the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Hendersons and Hyndmans,

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* I recently read an article in an English magazine by a Tory, a political opponent of Lloyd George, entitled "Lloyd George from the Standpoint of a Tory". The war opened the eyes of this opponent and made him realise what an excellent servant of the bourgeoisie this Lloyd George is! The Tories have made peace with him!

Plekhanovs, Renaudels and Co.? Of the latter, it may be objected, some will return to the revolutionary socialism of Marx. This is possible, but it is an insignificant difference in degree, if the question is regarded from its political, i.e., its mass aspect. Certain individuals among the present social-chauvinist leaders may return to the proletariat. But the social-chauvinist or (what is the same thing) opportunist *trend* can neither disappear nor "return" to the revolutionary proletariat. Wherever Marxism is popular among the workers, this political trend, this "bourgeois labour party", will swear by the name of Marx. It cannot be prohibited from doing this, just as a trading firm cannot be prohibited from using any particular label, sign or advertisement. It has always been the case in history that after the death of revolutionary leaders who were popular among the oppressed classes, their enemies have attempted to appropriate their names so as to deceive the oppressed classes.

The fact is that "bourgeois labour parties", as a political phenomenon, have already been formed in *all* the foremost capitalist countries, and that unless a determined and relentless struggle is waged all along the line against these parties—or groups, trends, etc., it is all the same—there can be no question of a struggle against imperialism, or of Marxism, or of a socialist labour movement. The Chkheidze faction, *Nashe Dyelo* and *Golos Truda* in Russia, and the O.C. supporters abroad are nothing but varieties of one *such* party. There is not the slightest reason for thinking that these parties will disappear *before* the social revolution. On the contrary, the nearer the revolution approaches, the more strongly it flares up and the more sudden and violent the transitions and leaps in its progress, the greater will be the part the struggle of the revolutionary mass stream against the opportunist petty-bourgeois stream will play in the labour movement. Kautskyism is not an independent trend, because it has no roots either in the masses or in the privileged stratum which has deserted to the bourgeoisie. But the danger of Kautskyism lies in the fact that, utilising the ideology of the past, it endeavours to reconcile the proletariat with the "bourgeois labour party", to preserve the unity of the proletariat with that party and thereby enhance the latter's prestige. The masses no longer follow the avowed social-chauvinists: Lloyd George has been hissed down at workers' meetings in England; Hyndman has left the party; the

Renaudels and Scheidemanns, the Potresovs and Gvozdyovs are protected by the police. The Kautskyites' masked defence of the social-chauvinists is much more dangerous.

One of the most common sophistries of Kautskyism is its reference to the "masses". We do not want, they say, to break away from the masses and mass organisations! But just think how Engels put the question. In the nineteenth century the "mass organisations" of the English trade unions were on the side of the bourgeois labour party. Marx and Engels did not reconcile themselves to it on this ground; they exposed it. They did not forget, firstly, that the trade union organisations directly embraced a *minority of the proletariat*. In England then, as in Germany now, not more than one-fifth of the proletariat was organised. No one can seriously think it possible to organise the majority of the proletariat under capitalism. Secondly—and this is the main point—it is not so much a question of the size of an organisation, as of the real, objective significance of its policy: does its policy represent the masses, does it serve them, i.e., does it aim at their liberation from capitalism, or does it represent the interests of the minority, the minority's reconciliation with capitalism? The latter was true of England in the nineteenth century, and it is true of Germany, etc., now.

Engels draws a distinction between the "bourgeois labour party" of the *old* trade unions—the privileged minority—and the "*lowest* mass", the real majority, and appeals to the latter, who are *not* infected by "bourgeois respectability". This is the essence of Marxist tactics!

Neither we nor anyone else can calculate precisely what portion of the proletariat is following and will follow the social-chauvinists and opportunists. This will be revealed only by the struggle, it will be definitely decided only by the socialist revolution. But we know for certain that the "defenders of the fatherland" in the imperialist war *represent* only a minority. And it is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain socialists, to go down *lower* and *deeper*, to the real masses; this is the whole meaning and the whole purport of the struggle against opportunism. By exposing the fact that the opportunists and social-chauvinists are in reality betraying and selling the interests of the masses, that they are defending the temporary privileges of a minority of the workers, that they are the vehicles of bourgeois ideas and influences, that they are really allies and agents of the bourgeoisie, we teach the masses to appreciate their true political interests, to fight for socialism and for the revolution through all the long and painful vicissitudes of imperialist wars and imperialist armistices.

The only Marxist line in the world labour movement is to explain to the masses the inevitability and necessity of breaking with opportunism, to educate them for revolution by waging a relentless struggle against opportunism, to utilise the experiences of the war to expose, not conceal, the utter vileness of national-liberal labour politics.

In the next article, we shall try to sum up the principal features that distinguish this line from Kautskyism.

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Collected Works, Vol. 23,
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From THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

THE SITUATION WITHIN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

16. The international obligations of the working class of Russia are precisely now coming to the forefront with particular force.

Only lazy people do not swear by internationalism these days. Even the chauvinist defencists, even Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists. It becomes the duty of the proletarian party all the more urgently, therefore, to clearly, precisely and definitely counterpose internationalism in deed to internationalism in word.

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a "sequence" of action by the revolutionary proletariat in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude "agreements" between the socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, all the fuss over the summoning of socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, and plans may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *deception* of the people by the chauvinists. The *French* social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and accomplished in methods of parliamentary hocus-pocus, have long since broken the record for ranting and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases *coupled with* the incredibly brazen betrayal of socialism and the International, the acceptance of posts in governments which conduct the imperialist war, the voting of credits *or loans* (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), opposition to the revolutionary struggle in *their own country*, etc., etc.

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist world war. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle*, this, *and only this*, line, in *every* country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.[103]

During the two odd years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in *every* country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognise the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight consistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in word and chauvinists in deed, people who recognise "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

These people are our *class* enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all* countries—Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians and the Labourites (the leaders of the "Labour Party") in Britain, Branting and Co. in Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other "defenders of the fatherland" in America, and so forth.

2) The second trend, known as the "Centre", consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists.

The "Centre" all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, for "demanding" in every way that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace", that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc., etc.—*and for peace with the social-chauvinists.* The "Centre" is for "unity", the Centre is opposed to a split.

The "Centre" is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in word and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deed.

The crux of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a whole-hearted revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-"Marxist"-sounding *excuses.*

The social-chauvinists are our *class enemies*, they are *bourgeois* within the working-class movement. They represent a stratum, or groups, or sections of the working class which *objectively* have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc.), and which help *their own* bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight *for* the division of the capitalist spoils.

The "Centre" consists of routine-worshippers, eroded by the canker of legality, corrupted by the parliamentary atmosphere, etc., bureaucrats accustomed to snug positions and soft jobs. Historically and economically speaking, they are not a *separate* stratum but represent only a *transition* from a past phase of the working-class movement—the phase between 1871 and 1914, which gave much that is valuable to the proletariat, particularly in the indispensable art of slow, sustained and systematic organisational work on a large and very large scale—to a new *phase* that became *objectively* essential with the outbreak of the first imperialist world war, which inaugurated *the era of social revolution.*

The chief leader and spokesman of the "Centre" is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914), since August 1914 a model of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, the embodiment of unheard-of spinelessness and the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. This "Centrist" trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so-called workers' or labour group[104] in the Reichstag; in France it includes Longuet, Pressemane and the so-called minoritaires [105] (Mensheviks) in general; in Britain, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party, and some leaders of the British Socialist Party; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Trèves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organising Committee, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

Naturally, at times individuals unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinist to the "Centrist" position, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, *trends* in political life are distinct in spite of the fact that individuals may change freely from one trend to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* trends.

3) The third trend, that of the true internationalists, is best represented by the "Zimmerwald Left". (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto [106] of September 1915, to enable the reader to learn of the inception of this trend at first hand.)

Its distinctive feature is its complete break with both social-chauvinism and "Centrism", and its gallant revolutionary struggle against *its own* imperialist government and *its own* imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: "Our chief enemy is at home." It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a socialist in word and a bourgeois pacifist in deed; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace *without* the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all *subterfuges* employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of a proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian socialist revolution *in connection* with the present war.

The most outstanding representative of this trend in Germany is the Spartacus group or the *Internationale* group,[107] to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is a most celebrated representative of this trend and of the *new*, and genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany to *turn their guns* against *their own* government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the rostrum of parliament (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration in Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan "Down with the Government!" He was arrested and sentenced to *hard labour*. He is now serving his term in a German convict prison, like *hundreds*, if not thousands, of other *true* German socialists who have been imprisoned for their anti-war activities.

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only *his own* Plekhanovs and Potresovs (Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co.), *but also his own Centrists*, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co.).

Karl Liebknecht and his friend Otto Rühle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline, destroyed the "unity" with the "Centre" and the chauvinists, and *went against all of them*. Liebknecht *alone* represents socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. *All* the rest of German Social-Democracy, to quote the apt words of Rosa Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus group), is a "*stinking corpse*".

Another group of true internationalists in Germany is that of the Bremen paper *Arbeiterpolitik*.[108]

Closest to the internationalists in deed are: in France, Loriot and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have slid down to social-pacifism), as well as the Frenchman Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the journal *Demain*; in Britain, the newspaper *The Trade Unionist*,[109] and *some* of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, Russel Williams, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have *betrayed* socialism), the Scottish socialist schoolteacher *MacLean*, who was sentenced to *hard labour* by the bourgeois government of Britain for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British socialists who are in jail for the same offence. They, and they alone, are internationalists *in deed*. In the United States, the Socialist Labour Party and those within the opportunist Socialist Party who in January 1917 began publication of the paper, *The Internationalist*[110]; in Holland, the Party of the "Tribunists" which publishes the paper *De Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wijnkoop, and Henriette Roland-Holst, who, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks); in

Sweden, the Party of the Young, or the Left, led by Lindhagen, Ture Nerman, Carleson, Ström and Z. Höglund, who at Zimmerwald was personally active in the organisation of the "Zimmerwald Left", and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war; in Denmark, Trier and his friends who have left the now purely *bourgeois* "Social-Democratic" Party of Denmark, headed by the *Minister* Stauning; in Bulgaria, the "Tesnyaki"; in Italy, the nearest are Constantino Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti!*; in Poland, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Regional Executive", and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Chief Executive"; in Switzerland, those of the Left who drew up the argument for the "referendum" (January 1917) in order to fight the social-chauvinists and the "Centre" in *their own* country and who at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention, held at Töss on February 11, 1917, moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, the young Left-wing friends of Friedrich Adler, who acted partly through the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian Government, which is ruining Adler's life for his heroic though ill-considered shooting at a minister, and so on.

It is not a question of shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. It is a question of *trend*. The thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deed during a terrible imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of socialism depends: they *alone* are *the leaders of the people*, and not their corrupters.

The distinction between the reformists and the revolutionaries, among the Social-Democrats, and socialists generally, was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to "demanding" that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace", etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. For, objectively, *the problem of the war* can be solved only in a *revolutionary way*.

There is no possibility of this war ending in a democratic, non-coercive peace or of the people being relieved of the burden of *billions* paid in interest to the capitalists, who have made fortunes out of the war, except through a revolution of the proletariat.

The most varied reforms can and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but one cannot, without sinking to Manilovism and reformism, demand that people and classes entangled by the thousands of threads of imperialist capital should *tear* those threads. And unless they are torn, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The "Kautskyites", the "Centre", are revolutionaries in word and reformists in deed, they are internationalists in word and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deed.

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From REPORT
ON THE CURRENT SITUATION DELIVERED TO THE SEVENTH (APRIL) ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

APRIL 24 (MAY 7), 1917

The resolution on the current situation is in three parts. The first defines the objective situation created by the imperialist war, the position in which world capitalism finds itself; the second deals with the state of the international proletarian movement; the third deals with the tasks of the Russian working class when power passes into its hands. In the first part I formulate the conclusion that during the war capitalism has developed even more than before the war. It has already taken over entire fields of production. Twenty-seven years ago, in 1891, when the Germans adopted their Erfurt Programme, Engels said that one could not continue to define capitalism as a system of production lacking planning.[111] This is now out of date; once there are trusts there can no longer be lack of planning. Capitalism has made gigantic strides, particularly in the twentieth century, and the war has done more than was done for twenty-five years. State control of industry has made progress in Britain as well as in Germany. Monopoly, in general, has evolved into state monopoly. The objective state of affairs has shown that the war has stepped up capitalist development, which has moved forward from capitalism to imperialism, from monopoly to state control. All this has brought the socialist revolution nearer and has created the objective conditions for it. Thus the socialist revolution has been brought closer as a result of the war.

Before the war Britain enjoyed a greater degree of freedom than any other country in the world, a point which politicians of the Cadet type have always stressed. There was freedom there because there was no revolutionary movement there. The war wrought an instant change. In a country where for decades no attempt was ever made to encroach upon the freedom of the socialist press, a typically tsarist censorship was immediately established, and all the prisons were filled with socialists. For centuries the capitalists there had learned to rule the people without the use of force, and if they have resorted to force, it means that they feel that the revolutionary movement is growing, that they cannot act otherwise.

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From WAR AND REVOLUTION

A Lecture Delivered May 14(27), 1917

The question of war and revolution has been dealt with so often lately in the press and at every public meeting that probably many of you are not only familiar with many aspects of the question but have come to find them tedious. I have not yet had a single opportunity to address or even attend any Party or for that matter any public meetings in this district, and therefore I run the risk, perhaps, of repetition or of not dealing in sufficient detail with those aspects of the question that interest you most.

It seems to me that the most important thing that is usually overlooked in the question of the war, a key issue to which insufficient attention is paid and over which there is so much dispute—useless, hopeless, idle dispute, I should say—is the question of the class character of the war: what caused that war, what classes are waging it, and what historical and historico-economic conditions gave rise to it. As far as I have been able to follow the way the question of the war is dealt with at public and Party meetings, I have come to the conclusion that the reason why there is so much misunderstanding on the subject is because, all too often, when dealing with the question of the war, we speak in entirely different languages.

From the point of view of Marxism, that is, of modern scientific socialism, the main issue in any discussion by socialists on how to assess the war and what attitude to adopt towards it is this. what is the war being waged for, and what classes staged and directed it. We Marxists do not belong to that category of people who are unqualified opponents of all war. We say: our aim is to achieve a socialist system of society, which, by eliminating the division of mankind into classes, by eliminating all exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, will inevitably eliminate the very possibility of war. But in the war to win that socialist system of society we are bound to encounter conditions under which the class struggle within each given nation may come up against a war between the different nations, a war conditioned by this very class struggle. Therefore, we cannot rule out the possibility of revolutionary wars, i.e., wars arising from the class struggle, wars waged by revolutionary classes, wars which are of direct and immediate revolutionary significance. Still less can we rule this out when we remember that though the history of European revolutions during the last century, in the course of 125-135 years, say, gave us wars which were mostly reactionary, it also gave us revolutionary wars, such as the war of the French revolutionary masses against a united monarchist, backward, feudal and semi-feudal Europe. No deception of the masses is more widespread today in Western Europe, and latterly here in Russia, too, than that which is practised by citing the example of revolutionary wars. There are wars and wars. We must be clear as to what historical conditions have given rise to the war, what classes are waging it, and for what ends. Unless we grasp this, all our talk about the war will necessarily be utterly futile, engendering more heat than light. That is why I take the liberty, seeing that you have chosen war and revolution as the subject of today's talk, to deal with this aspect of the matter at greater length.

We all know the dictum of Clausewitz, one of the most famous writers on the philosophy and history of war, which says: "War is a continuation of policy by other means." This dictum comes from a writer who reviewed the history of wars and drew philosophic lessons from it shortly after the period of the Napoleonic wars. This writer, whose basic views are now undoubtedly familiar to every thinking person, nearly eighty years ago challenged the ignorant man-in-the-street conception of war as being a thing apart from the policies of the governments and classes concerned, as being a simple attack that disturbs the peace, and is then followed by restoration of the peace thus disturbed, as much as to say: "They had a fight, then they made up!" This is a grossly ignorant view, one that was repudiated scores of years ago and is repudiated by any more or less careful analysis of any historical epoch of wars.

War is a continuation of policy by other means. All wars are inseparable from the political systems that engender them. The policy which a given state, a given class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war is inevitably continued by that same class during the war, the form of action alone being changed.

War is a continuation of policy by other means. When the French revolutionary townspeople and revolutionary peasants overthrew the monarchy at the close of the eighteenth century by revolutionary means and established a democratic republic—when they made short work of their monarch, and short work of their landowners, too, in a revolutionary fashion—that policy of the revolutionary class was bound to shake all the rest of autocratic, tsarist, imperial, and semi-feudal Europe to its foundations. And the inevitable continuation of this policy of the victorious revolutionary class in France was the wars in which all the monarchist nations of Europe, forming their famous coalition, lined up against revolutionary France in a counter-revolutionary war. Just as within the country the revolutionary people of France had then, for the first time, displayed revolutionary energy on a scale it had never shown for centuries, so in the war at the close of the eighteenth century it revealed a similar gigantic revolutionary creativeness when it remodelled its whole system of strategy, broke with all the old rules and traditions of warfare, replaced the old troops with a new revolutionary people's army, and created new methods of warfare. This example, to my mind, is noteworthy in that it clearly demonstrates to us things which the bourgeois journalists are now always forgetting when they pander to the philistine prejudices and ignorance of the backward masses who do not understand this intimate economic and historical connection between every kind of war and the preceding policy of every country, every class that ruled before the war and achieved its ends by so-called "peaceful" means. So-called, because the brute force required to ensure "peaceful" rule in the colonies, for example, can hardly be called peaceful.

Peace reigned in Europe, but this was because domination over hundreds of millions of people in the colonies by the European nations was sustained only through constant, incessant, interminable wars, which we Europeans do not regard as wars at all, since all too often they resembled, not wars, but brutal massacres, the wholesale slaughter of unarmed peoples. The thing is that if we want to know what the present war is about we must first of all make a general survey of the policies of the European powers as a whole. We must not take this or that example, this or that particular case, which can easily be wrenched out of the context of social phenomena and which is worthless, because an opposite example can just as easily be cited. We must take the whole policy of the entire system of European states in their economic and political interrelations if we are to understand how the present war steadily and inevitably grew out of this system.

We are constantly witnessing attempts, especially on the part of the capitalist press—whether monarchist or republican—to read into the present war an historical meaning which it does not possess. For example, no device is more frequently resorted to in the French Republic than that of presenting this war on France's part as a continuation and counterpart of the wars of the Great French Revolution of 1792. No device for hoodwinking the French masses, the French workers and the workers of all countries is more widespread than that of applying to our epoch the "jargon" of that other epoch and some of its watch words, or the attempt to present matters as though now, too, republican France is defending her liberty against the monarchy. One "minor" fact overlooked is that then, in 1792, war was waged in France by a revolutionary class, which had carried out an unparalleled revolution and displayed unmatched heroism in utterly destroying the French monarchy and rising against a united monarchist Europe with the sole and single aim of carrying on its revolutionary struggle.

The war in France was a continuation of the policy of the revolutionary class which had carried out the revolution, won the republic, settled accounts with the French capitalists and landowners with unprecedented vigour, and was waging a revolutionary war against a united monarchist Europe in continuation of that policy.

What we have at present is primarily two leagues, two groups of capitalist powers. We have before us all the world's greatest capitalist powers—Britain, France, America, and Germany—who for decades have doggedly pursued a policy of incessant economic rivalry aimed at achieving world supremacy, subjugating the small nations, and making threefold and tenfold profits on banking capital, which has caught the whole world in the net of its influence. That is what Britain's and Germany's policies really amount to. I stress this fact. This fact can never be emphasised strongly enough, because if we forget this we shall never understand what this war is about, and we shall then be easy game for any bourgeois publicist who tries. to foist lying phrases on us.

The real policies of the two groups of capitalist giants—Britain and Germany, who, with their respective allies, have taken the field against each other—policies which they were pursuing for decades before the war, should be studied and grasped in their entirety. If we did not do this we should not only be neglecting an essential requirement of scientific socialism and of all social science in general, but we should be unable to understand anything whatever about the present war. We should be putting ourselves in the power of Milyukov, that deceiver, who is stirring up chauvinism and hatred of one nation for another by methods which are applied everywhere without exception, methods which Clausewitz wrote about eighty years ago when he ridiculed the very view some people are holding today, namely, that the nations lived in peace and then they started fighting. As if this were true! How can a war be accounted for without considering its bearing on the preceding policy of the given state, of the given system of states, the given classes? I repeat: this is a basic point which is constantly overlooked. Failure to understand it makes nine-tenths of all war discussions mere wrangling, so much verbiage. We say: if you have not studied the policies of both belligerent groups over a period of decades—so as to avoid accidental factors and the quoting of random examples—if you have not shown what bearing this war has on preceding policies, then you don't understand what this war is all about.

These policies show us just one thing—continuous economic rivalry between the world's two greatest giants, capitalist economies. On the one hand we have Britain, a country which owns the greater part of the globe, a country which ranks first in wealth, which has created this wealth not so much by the labour of its workers as by the exploitation of innumerable colonies, by the vast power of its banks which have developed at the head of all the others into an insignificantly small group of some four or five super-banks handling billions of rubles, and handling them in such a way that it can be said without exaggeration that there is not a patch of land in the world today on which this capital has not laid its heavy hand, not a patch of land which British capital has not enmeshed by a thousand threads. This capital grew to such dimensions by the turn of the century that its activities extended far beyond the borders of individual states and formed a group of giant banks possessed of fabulous wealth. Having begotten this tiny group of banks, it has caught the whole world in the net of its billions. This is the sum and substance of Britain's economic policy and of the economic policy of France, of which even French writers, some of them contributors to *L'Humanité*, a paper now controlled by ex-socialists (in fact, no less a man than Lysis, the well-known financial writer), stated several years before the war: "France is a financial monarchy, France is a financial oligarchy, France is the world's money-lender."

On the other hand, opposed to this, mainly Anglo-French group, we have another group of capitalists, an even more rapacious, even more predatory one, a group who came to the capitalist banqueting table when all the seats were occupied, but who introduced into the struggle new methods for developing capitalist production, improved techniques, and superior organisation, which turned the old capitalism, the capitalism of the free-competition age, into the capitalism of giant trusts, syndicates, and cartels. This group introduced the beginnings of state-controlled capitalist production, combining the colossal power of capitalism with the colossal power of the state into a single mechanism and bringing tens of millions of people within the single organisation of state capitalism. Here is economic history, here is diplomatic history, covering several decades, from which no one can get away. It is the one and only guide-post to a proper solution of the problem of war; it leads you to the conclusion that the present war, too, is the outcome of the policies of the classes who have come to grips in it, of the two supreme giants, who, long before the war, had caught the whole world, all countries, in the net of financial exploitation and economically divided the globe up among themselves. They were bound to clash, because a redivision of this supremacy, from the point of view of capitalism, had become inevitable.

The old division was based on the fact that Britain, in the course of several centuries, had ruined her former competitors. A former competitor was Holland, which had dominated the whole world. Another was France, which had fought for supremacy for nearly a hundred years. After a series of protracted wars Britain was able, by virtue of her economic power, her merchant capital, to establish her unchallenged sway over the world. In 1871 a new predator appeared, a new capitalist power arose, which developed at an incomparably faster pace than Britain. That is a basic fact. You will not find a book on economic history that does not acknowledge this indisputable fact—the fact of Germany's faster development. This rapid development of capitalism in Germany was the development of a young strong predator, who appeared in the concert of European powers and said: "You ruined Holland, you defeated France, you have helped yourself to half the world—now be good enough to let us have our fair share." What does "a fair share" mean? How is it to be determined in the capitalist world, in the world of banks? There power is determined by the number of banks, there power is determined in the way described by a mouthpiece of the American multimillionaires, which declared with typically American frankness and typically American cynicism: "The war in Europe is being waged for world domination. To dominate the world two things are needed: dollars and banks. We have the dollars, we shall make the banks and we shall dominate the world." This statement was made by a leading newspaper of the American multimillionaires. I must say, there is a thousand times more truth in this cynical statement of a blustering American multimillionaire than in thousands of articles by bourgeois liars who try to make out that this war is being waged for national interests, on national issues, and utter similar glaringly patent lies which dismiss history completely and take an isolated example like the case of the German beast of prey who attacked Belgium. The case is undoubtedly a real one. This group of predators did attack Belgium with brutal ferocity, but it did the same thing the other group did yesterday by other means and is doing today to other nations.

When we argue about annexations—and this bears on the question I have been trying briefly to explain to you as the history of the economic and diplomatic relations which led up to the present war—when we argue about annexations we always forget that these, generally, are what the war is being waged for; it is for the carve-up of conquered territories, or, to put it more popularly, for the division of the plundered spoils by the two robber gangs. When we argue about annexations we constantly meet with methods which, scientifically speaking, do not stand up to criticism, and which, as methods of public journalism, are deliberate humbug. Ask a Russian chauvinist or social-chauvinist what annexation by Germany means, and he will give you an excellent explanation, because he understands that perfectly well. But he will never answer a request for a general definition of annexation that will fit them all—Germany, Britain, and Russia. He will never do that! And when *Rech* (to pass from theory to practice) sneered at *Pravda*, saying, "These Pravdists consider Kurland a case of annexation! How can you talk to such people!" and we answered: "Please give us such a definition of annexation as would apply to the Germans, the English, and the Russians, and we add that either you evade this issue or we shall expose you on the spot"—*Rech* kept silent. We maintain that no newspaper, either of the chauvinists in general, who simply say that the fatherland must be defended, or of the social-chauvinists, has ever given a definition of annexation that would fit both Germany and Russia, that would be applicable to any side. It cannot do this for the simple reason that this war is the continuation of a policy of annexations, that is, a policy of conquest, of capitalist robbery on the part of both groups involved in the war. Obviously, the question of which of these two robbers was the first to draw the knife is of small account to us. Take the history of the naval and military expenditures of these two groups over a period of decades, take the history of the little wars they waged before the big war—"little" because few Europeans died in those wars, whereas hundreds of thousands of people belonging to the nations they were subjugating died in them, nations which from their point of view could not be regarded as nations at all (you couldn't very well call those Asians and Africans nations!); the wars waged against these nations were wars against unarmed people, who were simply shot down, machine-gunned. Can you call them wars? Strictly speaking, they were not wars at all, and you could forget about them. That is their attitude to this downright deception of the masses.

The present war is a continuation of the policy of conquest, of the shooting down of whole nationalities, of unbelievable atrocities committed by the Germans and the British in Africa, and by the British and the Russians in Persia—

which of them committed most it is difficult to say. It was for this reason that the German capitalists looked upon them as their enemies. Ah, they said, you are strong because you are rich? But we are stronger, therefore we have the same "sacred" right to plunder. That is what the real history of British and German finance capital in the course of several decades preceding the war amounts to. That is what the history of Russo-German, Russo-British, and German-British relations amounts to. There you have the clue to an understanding of what the war is about. That is why the story that is current about the cause of the war is sheer duplicity and humbug. Forgetting the history of finance capital, the history of how this war had been brewing over the issue of redivision, they present the matter like this: two nations were living at peace, then one attacked the other, and the other fought back. All science, all banks are forgotten, and the peoples are told to take up arms, and so are the peasants, who know nothing about politics. All they have to do is to fight back! The logical thing, following this line of argument, would be to close down all newspapers, burn all books and ban all mention of annexations in the press. In this way such a view of annexations could be justified. They can't tell the truth about annexations because the whole history of Russia, Britain, and Germany has been one of continuous, ruthless and sanguinary war over annexations. Ruthless wars were waged in Persia and Africa by the Liberals, who flogged political offenders in India for daring to put forward demands which were being fought for here in Russia. The French colonial troops oppressed peoples too. There you have the pre-history, the real history of unprecedented plunder! Such is the policy of these classes, of which the present war is a continuation. That is why, on the question of annexations, they cannot give the reply that we give, when we say that any nation joined to another one, not by the voluntary choice of its majority but by a decision of a king or government, is an annexed nation. To renounce annexation is to give each nation the right to form a separate state or to live in union with whomsoever it chooses. An answer like that is perfectly clear to every worker who is at all class-conscious.

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From THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

Chapter III

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION. EXPERIENCE OF THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871. MARX'S ANALYSIS

1. WHAT MADE THE COMMUNARDS' ATTEMPT HEROIC?

It is well known that in the autumn of 1870, a few months before the Commune, Marx warned the Paris workers that any attempt to overthrow the government would be the folly of despair. But when, in March 1871, a decisive battle was *forced* upon the workers and they accepted it, when the uprising had become a fact, Marx greeted the proletarian revolution with the greatest enthusiasm, in spite of unfavourable auguries. Marx did not persist in the pedantic attitude of condemning an "untimely" movement as did the ill-famed Russian renegade from Marxism, Plekhanov, who in November 1905 wrote encouragingly about the workers' and peasants' struggle, but after December 1905 cried, liberal fashion: "They should not have taken up arms."

Marx, however, was not only enthusiastic about the heroism of the Communards, who, as he expressed it, "stormed heaven". Although the mass revolutionary movement did not achieve its aim, he regarded it as an historic experience of enormous importance, as a certain advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programmes and arguments. Marx endeavoured to analyse this experiment, to draw tactical lessons from it and re-examine his theory in the light of it.

The only "correction" Marx thought it necessary to make to the *Communist Manifesto* he made on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, signed by both its authors, is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the programme of the *Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become out-of-date" and they go on to say:

> "*...One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes'....*"[112]

The authors took the words that are in single quotation marks in this passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*.

Thus, Marx and Engels regarded one principal and fundamental lesson of the Paris Commune as being of such enormous importance that they introduced it as an important correction into the *Communist Manifesto*.

Most characteristically, it is this important correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning probably is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine-hundredths, of the readers of the *Communist Manifesto*. We shall deal with this distortion more fully farther on, in a chapter devoted specially to distortions. Here it will be sufficient to note that the current, vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous statement just quoted is that Marx here allegedly emphasises the idea of slow development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, *the exact opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up*, *smash* the "ready-made state machinery", and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.

On April 12, 1871, i.e., just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

> "If you look up the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics—the original is *zerbrechen*], and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting." (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1. 1901-02, p. 709.)

(The letters of Marx to Kugelmann have appeared in Russian in no less than two editions, one of which I edited and supplied with a preface.*)

The words, "to smash the bureaucratic-military machine", briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism regarding the tasks of the proletariat during a revolution in relation to the state. And it is this lesson that has been not only completely ignored, but positively distorted by the prevailing, Kautskyite, "interpretation" of Marxism!

As for Marx's reference to *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, we have quoted the relevant passage in full above.

It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he restricts his conclusion to the Continent. This was understandable in 1871, when Britain was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without a militarist clique and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Marx therefore excluded Britain, where a revolution, even a people's revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, *without* the precondition of destroying the "ready-made state machinery".

Today, in 1917, at the time of the first great imperialist war, this restriction made by Marx is no longer valid. Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon "liberty", in the sense that they had no militarist cliques and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and suppress everything. Today, in Britain and America, too, "the precondition for every real people's revolution" is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the "ready-made state machinery" (made and brought up to "European", general imperialist, perfection in those countries in the years 1914-17).

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is "the precondition for every real *people's* revolution". This idea of a "people's" revolution seems strange coming from Marx, so that the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a "slip of the pen" on Marx's part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution, and even this antithesis they interpret in an utterly lifeless way.

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* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 104-12.—*Ed.*

If we take the revolutions of the twentieth century as examples we shall, of course, have to admit that the Portuguese and the Turkish revolutions are both bourgeois revolutions. Neither of them, however, is a "people's" revolution, since in neither does the mass of the people, their vast majority, come out actively, independently, with their own economic and political demands to any noticeable degree. By contrast, although the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905-07 displayed no such "brilliant" successes as at times fell to the Portuguese and Turkish revolutions, it was undoubtedly a "real people's" revolution, since the mass of the people, their majority, the very lowest social groups, crushed by oppression and exploitation, rose independently and stamped on the entire course of the revolution the imprint of *their* own demands, *their* attempts to build in their own way a new society in place of the old society that was being destroyed.

In Europe, in 1871, the proletariat did not constitute the majority of the people in any country on the Continent. A "people's" revolution, one actually sweeping the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasants. These two classes then constituted the "people". These two classes are united by the fact that the "bureaucratic-military state machine" oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To *smash* this machine, *to break it up*, is truly in the interest of the "people", of their majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, is "the precondition" for a free alliance of the poor peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible.

As is well known, the Paris Commune was actually working its way toward such an alliance, although it did not reach its goal owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external.

Consequently, in speaking of a "real people's revolution", Marx, without in the least discounting the special features of the petty bourgeoisie (he spoke a great deal about them and often), took strict account of the actual balance of class forces in most of the continental countries of Europe in 1871. On the other hand, he stated that the "smashing" of the state machine was required by the interests of both the workers and the peasants, that it united them, that it placed before them the common task of removing the "parasite" and of replacing it by something new.

By what exactly?

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Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 413-17

From "LEFT-WING" CHILDISHNESS AND THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS MENTALITY

The following is also extremely instructive.

When we argued with Comrade Bukharin in the Central Executive Committee,* he declared, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists "we" (evidently meaning the "Left Communists"[113]) were "more to the right than Lenin", for in this case "we" saw no deviation from principle, bearing in mind Marx's words that under certain conditions it is more expedient for the working class to "buy out the whole lot of them" (namely, the whole lot of capitalists, i.e., *to buy* from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, works and other means of production).

This extremely interesting statement shows, in the first place, that Bukharin is head and shoulders above the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists, that he is by no means hopelessly stuck in the mud of phrase-making, but on the contrary is making efforts to think out the *concrete* difficulties of the transition—the painful and difficult transition—from capitalism to socialism.

In the second place, this statement makes Bukharin's mistake still more glaring.

Let us consider Marx's idea carefully.

Marx was talking about the Britain of the seventies of the last century, about the culminating point in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism. At that time Britain was a country in which militarism and bureaucracy were less pronounced than in any other, a country in which there was the greatest possibility of a "peaceful" victory for socialism in the sense of the workers "buying out" the bourgeoisie. And Marx said that under certain conditions the workers would certainly not refuse to buy out the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself, or the future leaders of the socialist revolution, to matters of form, to ways and means of bringing about the revolution. He understood perfectly well that a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, and that the situation would change *radically* and *often* in the course of revolution.

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* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 310.—*Ed.*

Well, and what about Soviet Russia? Is it not clear that *after* the seizure of power by the proletariat and *after* the crushing of the exploiters' armed resistance and sabotage, *certain* conditions prevail which correspond to those which might have existed in Britain half a century ago had a peaceful transition to socialism begun there? The subordination of the capitalists to the workers in Britain would have been assured at that time owing to the following circumstances: (1) the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there was hope of an extremely rapid spread of socialism among agricultural labourers); (2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat in trade unions (Britain was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); (3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; (4) the old habit of the well-organised British capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the British capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any other country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany). These were the circumstances which at that time gave rise to the idea that the *peaceful* subjugation of the British capitalists by the workers was possible.

In our country, at the present time, this subjugation is assured by certain premises of fundamental significance (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the capitalists' armed resistance and sabotage). But *instead of* the absolute preponderance of workers, of proletarians, in the population, and *instead of* a high degree of organisation among them, the important factor of victory in Russia was the support the proletarians received from the poor peasants and those who had experienced sudden ruin. Finally, we have neither a high degree of culture nor the habit of compromise. If these concrete conditions are carefully considered, it will become clear that we can and ought to employ two methods *simultaneously*. On the one hand we must ruthlessly suppress* the uncultured capitalists who refuse to have anything to do with "state capitalism" or to consider any form of compromise, and who continue by means of profiteering, by bribing the poor peasants, etc., to hinder the realisation of the measures taken by the Soviets. On the other hand, we must use the *method of compromise*, or of buying off the cultured capitalists who agree to "state capitalism", who are capable of putting it into practice and who are useful to the proletariat as intelligent and experienced organisers of the *largest* types of enterprises, which actually supply products to tens of millions of people.

Bukharin is an extremely well-read Marxist economist. He therefore remembered that Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers the importance of preserving the organisation of large-scale production, precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism. Marx taught that (as an exception, and Britain was then an exception) the idea was conceivable of *paying the capitalists well*, or buying them off, *if* the circumstances were such as to compel the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, provided they were paid.

But Bukharin went astray because he did not go deep enough into the specific features of the situation in Russia at the present time—an exceptional situation when we, the Russian proletariat, are in *advance* of any Britain or any Germany as regards our political order, as regards the strength of the workers' political power, but are *behind* the most backward West-European country as regards organising a good state capitalism, as regards our level of culture and the degree of material and productive preparedness for the "introduction" of socialism. Is it not clear that the specific nature of the present situation creates the need for a specific type of "buying out" which the workers must offer to the most cultured, the most skilled, the most capable organisers among the capitalists who are ready to enter the service of Soviet power and to help honestly in organising "state" production on the largest possible scale? Is it not clear that in this specific situation we must make every effort to avoid two mistakes, both of which are of a petty-bourgeois nature? On the one hand, it would be a fatal mistake to declare that since there is a discrepancy between our economic "forces" and our political strength, it "follows" that we should not have seized power. "Such an argument can be advanced only by a "man in a muffler", [114] who forgets that there will always be such a "discrepancy", that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the development of society, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from certain inconsistencies—will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletarians of *all* countries.

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* In this case also we must look truth in the face. We still have too little of that ruthlessness which is indispensable for the success of socialism, and we have too little not because we lack determination. We have sufficient determination. What we do lack is the ability to *catch* quickly enough a sufficient number of profiteers, racketeers and capitalists—the people who infringe the measures passed by the Soviets. The "ability" to do this can only be acquired by establishing accounting and control! Another thing is that the courts are not sufficiently firm. Instead of sentencing people who take bribes to be shot, they sentence them to six months' imprisonment. These two defects have the same social root: the influence of the petty-bourgeois element, its flabbiness.

On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give free rein to ranters and phrase-mongers who allow themselves to be carried away by the "dazzling" revolutionary spirit, but who are incapable of sustained, thoughtful and deliberate revolutionary work which takes into account the most difficult stages of transition.

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Collected Works, Vol. 27, pp. 342-46

From REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AT THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF TRADE UNIONS AND FACTORY COMMITTEES OF MOSCOW

JUNE 28, 1918

In 1914 the International was wrecked because the workers of all countries united with the bourgeoisie in their respective countries and split their own ranks. Now, this split is being healed. Perhaps you have read that in Britain recently the Scottish schoolteacher and trade unionist McLean was sentenced for a second time, to five years' imprisonment—the first time he was sentenced to eighteen months—for exposing the real objects of the war and speaking about the criminal nature of British imperialism. When he was released there was already a representative of the Soviet Government in Britain, Litvinov, who immediately appointed McLean Consul, a representative of the Soviet Russian Federative Republic in Britain, and the Scottish workers greeted this appointment with enthusiasm. The British Government has again started persecuting McLean and this time not only as a Scottish schoolteacher, but also as Consul of the Federative Soviet Republic. McLean is in prison because he acted openly as the representative of our government; we have never seen this man, he is the beloved leader of the Scottish workers, he has never belonged to our Party, but we joined with him; the Russian and Scottish workers united against the British Government in spite of the fact that the latter buys Czechoslovaks[115] and is manoeuvring frantically to drag the Russian Republic into the war. This is proof that in all countries, irrespective of their position in the war—in Germany which is fighting against us, in Britain which is trying to grab Baghdad and strangle Turkey—the workers are uniting with the Russian Bolsheviks, with the Russian Bolshevik revolution.

A question has been sent to me in writing; it reads as follows: "Why are counter-revolutionary newspapers still published?" One of the reasons is that there are elements among the printers who are bribed by the bourgeoisie. (*Commotion*, *shouts*: "It's not true.") You can shout as much as you like, but you will not prevent me from telling the truth, which all the workers know and which I have just begun to explain. When a worker attaches great importance to the wages he gets for working for the bourgeois press, when he says: "I want to keep my high wages by helping the bourgeoisie to sell poison, to poison the minds of the people", then I say it is as if these workers were bribed by the bourgeoisie (*applause*), not in the sense that any individual person was hired, but in the sense in which all Marxists have spoken about the British workers who ally themselves with their capitalists. All of you who have read trade union literature know that there are not only trade unions in Britain, but also alliances between the workers and capitalists in a particular industry for the purpose of raising prices and of robbing everybody else. All Marxists, all socialists of all countries point the finger of scorn at these cases and, beginning with Marx and Engels, say that there are workers who, owing to their ignorance and pursuit of their craft interests, allow themselves to be bribed by the bourgeoisie. They have sold their birthright, their right to the socialist revolution, by entering into an alliance with their capitalists against the overwhelming majority of the workers and the oppressed toilers in their own country, against their own class. The same thing is happening here. When certain groups of workers say, the fact that the stuff we print is opium, poison, spreads lies and provocation, has nothing to do with us, we get high wages and we don't care a hang for anybody else—we will denounce such workers. In our literature we have always said openly: "Such workers are abandoning the working class and deserting to the side of the bourgeoisie." (*Applause*.)

Full report published in 1918
in the book: *Minutes of the Fourth Conference of Factory Committees and Trade Unions of Moscow*, A.C.C.T.U. Publishers

Collected Works, Vol. 27, pp. 483-85

From SPEECH AT A JOINT SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE MOSCOW SOVIET, FACTORY COMMITTEES AND TRADE UNIONS OF MOSCOW

JULY 29, 1918

(*Applause, which grows into ovation.*) Comrades, this is not the first time we have pointed out in the Party press, in Soviet institutions and in our agitation among the people that the period up to the new harvest will be the most difficult, arduous and crucial phase in the socialist revolution that has begun in Russia. Now, I think, we must say that this crucial situation has reached its climax. That is because it has now become perfectly clear once and for all who are the supporters of the imperialist world, of the imperialist countries, and who are the supporters of the Soviet Socialist Republic. It should first be said that from the military standpoint the position of the Soviet Republic has only now become quite clear. Many at first regarded the Czechoslovak revolt as just one of the episodes in the chain of counter-revolutionary revolts. We did not sufficiently appreciate the news in the papers about the participation in this revolt of British and French capital, of the British and French imperialists. We must now recall how events developed in Murmansk, among the Siberian troops and in the Kuban, how the British and French, in alliance with the Czechs, with the closest co-operation of the British bourgeoisie, endeavoured to overthrow the Soviets. All these facts now show that the Czechoslovak movement was one link in the chain long since forged by the systematic policy of the British and French imperialists to throttle Soviet Russia so as to again drag Russia into the ring of imperialist wars. This crisis must now be resolved by the broad mass of the people of Soviet Russia, for we are today faced not only with a struggle to preserve the Soviet Socialist Republic from the Czech attack, as one particular counter-revolutionary assault, and not even from counter-revolutionary assaults in general, but with a struggle against the onslaught of the whole imperialist world.

I should like first of all to remind you of the fact that the direct participation of the British and French imperialists in the Czechoslovak revolt has long been established; I would remind you of an article printed by *Průkopník Svobody*, the central organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, on June 28 and reprinted in our press:

> "On March 7, the Department of the National Council received the first instalment from the French Consul to the amount of three million rubles.
>
> This money was handed to a certain Mr. Šíp, an official of the Department of the National Council.
>
> On March 9, this same Šíp received another two million and on March 25 another million, and on March 26, Mr. Bohumil-Čermák, Vice-President of the National Council, received one million; on April 3, Mr. Šíp received another million.
>
> In all, from March 7 to April 4, the French Consul paid the Department of the National Council 8 million rubles.
>
> No dates are indicated for the following payments: Mr. Šíp one million, Mr. Bohumil-Čermák one million and Mr. Šíp another million.
>
> In addition, a sum of 188,000 rubles was paid to an unknown person. Total: 3,188,000 rubles. Together with the above-mentioned 8 million we get a total of 11,188,000 rubles paid by the French Government to the Department of the National Council.
>
> From the British Consul the Department received £80,000. Thus, from March 7 to the date of action, the leaders of the Czech National Council received about 15 million rubles from the French and British governments, and for this sum the Czechoslovak army was sold to the French and British imperialists."

The majority of you, of course, read this report in the newspapers at the time it was published. We certainly never doubted that the imperialists and financial magnates of Britain and France would do their very utmost to overthrow the Soviet government and place every possible obstacle in its way. But at that time the picture was not yet complete to show that what we are faced with here is a systematic, methodical and evidently long-planned counter-revolutionary military and financial campaign against the Soviet Republic, which all the representatives of British and French imperialism had evidently been preparing for months. The general trend of events becomes clear now when we review them as a whole, when we compare the Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary movement with the Murmansk landing—where we know the British have disembarked over ten thousand soldiers, and under the pretext of defending Murmansk have actually begun to advance, have occupied Kem and Soroki, have moved to the east of Soroki, and have begun to shoot our Soviet officials—and when we read in the newspapers that many thousands of railwaymen and other workers of the Far North are fleeing from these saviours and liberators, or, to give them their true name, these new imperialist bandits who are rending Russia from another end. And quite recently we received new confirmation of the character of the Anglo-French offensive against Russia.

For geographical considerations alone it is clear that the form of this imperialist offensive against Russia cannot be the same as it was in the case of Germany. There are no common frontiers with Russia, as in the case of Germany; troop strength is less. In her wars of conquest, Britain has been compelled for many decades, owing to the primarily colonial and naval character of her military might, to employ different methods of attack, to attempt chiefly to cut off her victim's supply sources, and to prefer the method of strangulation, under pretext of aid, to open, direct, blunt and outright military force. From information recently received, it is clear that Alexeyev, who has long been notorious among the Russian soldiers and workers and who recently seized the village of Tikhoretskaya, has undoubtedly been utilising the aid of British and French imperialism. There the revolt was more clear-cut, again apparently because British and French imperialism had a hand in it.

Lastly, we received news yesterday that in Baku the British and French imperialists have succeeded in making a very effective move. They have managed to secure a majority of about thirty votes in the Baku Soviet over our Party, over the Bolsheviks, and those Left Socialist-Revolutionaries—unfortunately, very few in number—who refused to fall in with the despicable gambles and treachery of the Moscow Left Socialist-Revolutionaries,[116] and who have remained loyal to the Soviet government in the struggle against imperialism and war. Over this nucleus in the Baku Soviet which is loyal to the Soviet government and which up to now constituted the majority, the British and French imperialists have now secured a majority of thirty votes, owing to the fact that the greater part of the Dashnaktsutyun Party, [117] the Armenian quasi-socialists, have sided with them against us. (*Reads telegram.*)

"On July 26, on the orders of People's Commissar Korganov, the Adji-Kabul detachment retired from Adji-Kabul to a position near Alyat. After the withdrawal of the Shemakha detachment from Shemakha and Maraza the enemy began to advance along the River Pirsagat valley[118]; the first skirmish with the enemy's vanguard occurred near the village of Kubala.

"Simultaneously from the south, from the direction of the Kura, a large force of cavalry began to advance towards Pirsagat. Under the circumstances, to hold Adji-Kabul we would have had to deploy all our available forces on three sides: to the west of Adji-Kabul, and to the north and south of the Navagi-Pirsagat valley. Such an extension of the front would have left us without reserves and would have made it impossible for us to strike at the enemy as we have no cavalry, and would even have endangered the group at Adji-Kabul if the front had been broken from the north or south. In view of this situation, and in order to conserve the strength of the troops, orders were given to the detachment to retreat from Adji-Kabul to a position near Alyat. The retreat was carried out in good order. Important railway installations and the Adji-Kabul station, as well as the kerosene and oil tanks, have been blown up. In Daghestan, the enemy is on the move as part of the general offensive. On July 24, the enemy advanced in large forces inf our directions. After twenty-four hours' fighting we occupied the enemy's trenches; the foe dispersed into the woods and nightfall prevented further pursuit. On July 24, news of successes was received from Shura, where fighting is going on around the town; the enemy is putting up a stubborn and organised resistance, and is commanded by former Daghestan officers. Daghestan peasants are taking an active part in the fighting around Shura.

"The Right-wing parties in Baku have raised their heads and are vigorously campaigning to call in the British. This campaign is strongly backed by the army officers and is being conducted among the forces at the front. Anglophil agitation has disorganised the army. The British orientation has recently been making great headway among the worn-out and despairing people.

"Under the influence of the unscrupulous and provocative activities of the Right-wing parties, the Caspian flotilla has adopted several contradictory resolutions in regard to the British. Deceived by British hirelings and volunteer agents, until quite recently it blindly believed in the sincerity of British support.

Latest reports say that the British are advancing in Persia and have occupied Resht (Giljan), where for four days they have been engaged against Kuchuk-Khan and the German and Turkish bands, who have joined forces with him, headed by Mussavatists who had fled from Baku. After the Resht battle the British applied to us for assistance, but our representatives in Persia refused. The British got the upper hand in Resht. But they have practically no forces in Persia. We know they have only fifty men in Enzeli. They need petrol, in exchange for which they are offering us cars. Without petrol they are stuck.

"On July 25, a second session of the Soviet was held to discuss the political and military situation, and at the insistence of the Right-wing parties the question of the British was raised. Comrade Shahumyan, Commissar Extraordinary for the Caucasus, citing the resolution of the Fifth Congress of Soviets and Stalin's telegram on behalf of the Central Council of People's Commissars, spoke against inviting the British and demanded that this question be struck from the agenda. Comrade Shahumyan's move was defeated by a small majority, whereupon, as representative of the central government, he entered a vigorous protest. The session heard the report of the delegates who had visited the front. By 259 votes of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Right Dashnaks and Mensheviks against 236 votes of the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Dashnaks, a resolution was adopted to invite the British and form a government comprising members of all parties represented in the Soviet and recognising the power of the Council of People's Commissars. The resolution was sharply condemned by the Left wing. Shahumyan declared that he regarded it as a shameful betrayal and stark ingratitude towards the workers and peasants of Russia and that as the central government's representative, he renounced all responsibility for the decision. A statement was made on behalf of the group of the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Left Dashnaks to the effect that they would not join the coalition government and that the Council of People's Commissars would resign. Comrade Shahumyan declared in the name of the three Left groups that a government which had in fact broken with the Russian Soviet government by inviting the British imperialists would receive no support from Soviet Russia. By its treacherous policy of inviting the British, the local Soviet had lost Russia and the parties supporting the Soviet government.

"The Right-wing parties were thrown into utter confusion at the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to resign. When news of this situation got around there was an abrupt change of sentiment in the districts and at the front. The sailors realised they had been duped by traitors who want to break with Russia and bring down the Soviet government. The people are having second thoughts about the British. Yesterday, an urgent meeting of the Executive Committee was held over the resignation of the Council of People's Commissars. It was decided that all the People's Commissars should remain at their posts and continue their former functions pending decision of the question of power at the Soviet's session on July 31. The Executive Committee has decided to take urgent measures to combat the threatening counter-revolution. The foe is carrying on activities under the wing of the Anglo-French parties.

"Press Bureau of the Baku Council of People's Commissars."

Not unlike the groups here who call themselves socialists but have never broken off relations with the bourgeoisie, there, too, these people came out in favour of inviting the British troops to defend Baku. We already know only too well the meaning of such an invitation to imperialist troops to defend the Soviet Republic. We know the meaning of this invitation extended by the bourgeoisie, a section of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and by the Mensheviks. We know the meaning of this invitation extended by the Menshevik leaders in Tiflis, Georgia.

We may now say that the Bolshevik, the Communist Party is the only party which has never invited imperialists and has never entered into a rapacious alliance with them, but has only retreated before these cutthroats when they pressed too hard. (*Applause.*) We know our Communist comrades in the Caucasus were in a very difficult position because the Mensheviks betrayed them everywhere by entering into direct alliance with the German imperialists, on the pretext, of course, of defending Georgia's independence.

You are all aware that this independence of Georgia has become a sheer fraud. In actual fact it amounts to the occupation and complete seizure of Georgia by the German imperialists, an alliance of German bayonets with the Menshevik government against the Bolshevik workers and peasants. And, therefore, our Baku comrades were a thousand times right in refusing to close their eyes to the danger of the situation and saying: We would never be opposed to peace with an imperialist power on the basis of ceding part of our territory, provided this would not harm us, would not bind our troops in an alliance with the bayonets of the aggressors and would not prevent us from carrying on our socialist reconstruction.

But since, as the question now stands, by inviting the British, supposedly for the defence of Baku, they are inviting a power which has now swallowed up the whole of Persia and which has long been moving up its forces for seizing the Southern Caucasus—that is, surrendering themselves to British and French imperialism—we cannot doubt or hesitate for a moment and must say that, however difficult the position of our Baku comrades may be, by refusing to conclude such a peace they have taken the only step worthy of true socialists. This resolute rejection of any agreement whatsoever with the British and French imperialists was the only true course for our Baku comrades to take, for you cannot invite them without converting your independent socialist government, even though on severed territory, into a slave of imperialist war.

We therefore do not entertain the slightest doubt as to the significance of the Baku events in the general scheme of things. Yesterday, news was received that counter-revolutionary revolts have broken out in a number of towns in Central Asia with the obvious complicity of the British entrenched in India, who, having brought Afghanistan completely under their sway, long ago created a base for extending their colonial possessions, strangling nations, and attacking Soviet Russia. And now, when these separate links have become quite clear to us, the present military and general strategic position of our Republic has been fully revealed. Murmansk in the North, the Czechoslovak front in the East, Turkestan, Baku and Astrakhan in the South-East—we see that practically all the links in the chain forged by British and French imperialism have been joined.

We now clearly see that the landowners, the capitalists and the kulaks, all of whom, of course, for perfectly natural reasons have a burning hatred for the Soviet government, are acting here, too, in ways greatly resembling those of the landowners, capitalists and kulaks in the Ukraine and in other regions severed from Russia. As the lackeys of British and French imperialism, they have done their utmost to undermine the Soviet government at all costs. Realising they could not do it with forces inside Russia alone, they decided to act not by words or appeals in the spirit of the Martov gentry, but by resorting to more effective methods of struggle—military hostilities. That is where our attention should be chiefly directed; that is where we should concentrate all our agitation and propaganda; and we should shift the centre of the whole of our Soviet work accordingly.

The fundamental fact is that it is the imperialist forces of the other coalition that are now at work, not the German, but the Anglo-French, which have seized part of our territory and are using it as a base. Up to now their geographical position has prevented them from attacking Russia by the direct route; now British and French imperialism, which for four years has been drenching the whole world in blood in a bid for world supremacy, has by an indirect route approached within easy reach of Russia, with the object of strangling the Soviet Republic and once more plunging Russia into imperialist war. You are all perfectly aware, comrades, that from the very beginning of the October Revolution our chief aim has been to put a stop to the imperialist war; but we never harboured the illusion that the forces of the proletariat and the revolutionary people of any one country, however heroic and however organised and disciplined they might be, could overthrow international imperialism. That can be done only by the joint efforts of the workers of the world, What we have done, however, is to sever all connections with the capitalists of the whole world in one country. Our government is not tied by a single thread to any kind of imperialists and never will be, whatever future course our revolution may take. The revolutionary movement against imperialism during the eight months of our rule has made tremendous strides, and in one of the chief centres of imperialism, Germany, matters in January 1918 came to an armed clash and the bloody suppression of that movement. We have done our revolutionary duty, as no revolutionary government in any country has ever done, on an international, world-wide scale. But we never deceived ourselves into thinking this could be done by the efforts of one country alone. We knew that our efforts were inevitably leading to a world-wide revolution, and that the war begun by the imperialist governments could not be stopped by the efforts of those governments themselves. It can be stopped only by the efforts of all workers; and when we came to power, our task as the proletarian Communist Party, at a time when capitalist bourgeois rule still remained in the other countries—our immediate task, I repeat, was to retain that power, that torch of socialism, so that it might scatter as many sparks as possible to add to the growing flames of socialist revolution.

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Collected Works, Vol. 28, pp. 17-25

SPEECH AT A MEETING OF THE WARSAW REVOLUTIONARY REGIMENT

AUGUST 2, 1918

Newspaper Report

(*Comrade Lenin's appearance in the hall is greeted with enthusiastic applause and the "Internationale".*) We Polish and Russian revolutionaries are now burning with one desire—to do everything to defend the gains of the first mighty socialist revolution, which will inevitably be followed by a series of revolutions in other countries. Our difficulty is that we had to take action much earlier than the workers of the more cultured, more civilised countries.

The world war was caused by the forces of international capital, of two coalitions of vultures. For four years the world has been drenched in blood in order to settle which of these two rapacious imperialist groups shall rule the globe. We feel and sense that this criminal war cannot end in victory for either of them. It is becoming clearer every day that a victorious workers' revolution, not the imperialists, can end it. And the worse the position of the workers now becomes in all countries, and the more ferociously proletarian free speech is persecuted, the more desperate the bourgeoisie get, for they cannot cope with the growing movement. We have for a time forged ahead of the main body of the socialist army, which is full of hope as it watches us and says to its bourgeoisie: however much you rant and rage, we shall follow the Russian example and do what the Russian Bolsheviks have done.

We wanted peace. It was just because Soviet Russia proposed peace to the whole world[119] that in February German troops attacked us. Now, however, we see with our own eyes that one imperialism is no better than the other. Both of them have lied, and lie now when they say they are waging a war of liberation. Anglo-French capital is showing itself up just as robber Germany once did with the utterly shameful Brest Peace.[120] The British and French are now making their last bid to draw us into the war. For fifteen million, through generals and other officers, they have now bought new lackeys, the Czechs, so as to involve them in the rash adventure and turn the Czechoslovak revolt into a whiteguard-landlord movement. And strange to say, all this is apparently being done to "defend" Russia. The "freedom-loving" and "fair" British oppress all and sundry, seize Murmansk British cruisers come right up to Archangel and bomba,rd the coastal batteries—all to "defend" Russia. Quite obviously they want to encircle Russia in a ring of imperialist plunderers and crush her for having exposed and torn up their secret treaties.

Our revolution has resulted in the workers of Britain and France indicting their governments. In Britain, where civil peace has prevailed and where the workers' resistance to socialism has been strongest, for they too have had a hand in plundering the colonies, the workers are now veering round and breaking the civil peace with the bourgeoisie.

The workers of France are condemning the policy of intervention in Russia's affairs. That is why the capitalists of these countries are staking everything they have.

The fact of Soviet Russia's existence and vitality is driving them mad.

We know the war is coming to an end; we know they cannot finish it; we know we have a reliable ally. We must therefore exert all our energy and make a last effort. Either the rule of the proletariat or the rule of the kulaks, capitalists and the tsar, as was the case in the unsuccessful revolutions in the West. As you go to the front you must remember above all that this war alone, the war of the oppressed and exploited against the violators and plunderers, is legitimate, just and sacred.

An alliance is coming into being between the revolutionaries of different nations—something that the finest people have dreamt of; a real alliance of workers, and not intellectual dreamers.

The guarantee of victory lies in overcoming national hatred and mistrust.

It is your great privilege to uphold sacred ideas arms in hand, and to make international brotherhood of nations a reality by fighting together with your front-line enemies of yesterday—Germans, Austrians and Magyars.

And, comrades, I am confident that if you muster all your military forces and set up a mighty international Red Army, and hurl these iron battalions against the exploiters and oppressors, against the reactionary thugs of the whole world, making your battle cry "Victory or Death!"—no imperialist force will be able to hold us! (*Lenin's concluding words are drowned in prolonged and stormy applause.*)

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Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 38-40

From LETTER TO AMERICAN WORKERS

The four years of the imperialist slaughter of nations, however, have not passed in vain. The deception of the people by the scoundrels of both robber groups, the British and the German, has been utterly exposed by indisputable and obvious facts. The results of the four years of war have revealed the general law of capitalism as applied to war between robbers for the division of spoils: the richest and strongest profited and grabbed most, while the weakest were utterly robbed, tormented, crushed and strangled.

The British imperialist robbers were the strongest in number of "colonial slaves". The British capitalists have not lost an inch of "their" territory (i.e., territory they have grabbed over the centuries), but they have grabbed all the German colonies in Africa, they have grabbed Mesopotamia and Palestine, they have throttled Greece, and have begun to plunder Russia.

The German imperialist robbers were the strongest in organisation and discipline of "their" armies, but weaker in regard to colonies. They have lost all their colonies, but plundered half of Europe and throttled the largest number of small countries and weak nations. What a great war of "liberation" on both sides! How well the robbers of both groups, the Anglo-French and the German capitalists, together with their lackeys, the social-chauvinists, i.e., the socialists who went over to the side of "*their own*" bourgeoisie, have "defended their country"!

The American multimillionaires were, perhaps, richest of all, and geographically the most secure. They have profited more than all the rest. They have converted all, even the richest, countries into their tributaries. They have grabbed hundreds of billions of dollars. And every dollar is sullied with filth: the filth of the secret treaties between Britain and her "allies", between Germany and her vassals, treaties for the division of the spoils, treaties of mutual "aid" for oppressing the workers and persecuting the internationalist socialists. Every dollar is sullied with the filth of "profitable" war contracts, which in every country made the rich richer and the poor poorer. And every dollar is stained with blood—from that ocean of blood that has been shed by the ten million killed and twenty million maimed in the great, noble, liberating and holy war to decide whether the British or the German robbers are to get most of the spoils, whether the British or the German thugs are to be *foremost* in throttling the weak nations all over the world.

While the German robbers broke all records in war atrocities, the British have broken all records not only in the number of colonies they have grabbed, but also in the subtlety of their disgusting hypocrisy. This very day, the Anglo-French and American bourgeois newspapers are spreading, in millions and millions of copies, lies and slander about Russia, and are hypocritically justifying their predatory expedition against her on the plea that they want to "protect" Russia from the Germans!

It does not require many words to refute this despicable and hideous lie; it is sufficient to point to one well-known fact. In October 1917, after the Russian workers had overthrown their imperialist government, the Soviet government, the government of the revolutionary workers and peasants, openly proposed a just peace, a peace without annexations or indemnities, a peace that fully guaranteed equal rights to all nations—and it proposed such a peace to *all* the belligerent countries.

It was the Anglo-French and the American bourgeoisie who refused to accept our proposal; it was they who even refused to talk to us about a general peace! It was *they* who betrayed the interests of all nations; it was they who prolonged the imperialist slaughter!

It was they who, banking on the possibility of dragging Russia back into the imperialist war, refused to take part in the peace negotiations and thereby gave a free hand to the no less predatory German capitalists who imposed the annexationist and harsh Brest Peace upon Russia!

It is difficult to imagine anything more disgusting than the hypocrisy with which the Anglo-French and American bourgeoisie are now "blaming" us *for* the Brest Peace Treaty. The very capitalists of those countries which could have turned the Brest negotiations into general negotiations for a general peace are now our "accusers"! The Anglo-French imperialist vultures, who have profited from the plunder of colonies and the slaughter of nations, have prolonged the war for nearly a whole year after Brest, and yet they "accuse" *us*, the Bolsheviks, who proposed a just peace to all countries, they accuse *us*, who tore up, published and exposed to public disgrace the secret, criminal treaties concluded between the ex-tsar and the Anglo-French capitalists.

The workers of the whole world, no matter in what country they live, greet us, sympathise with us, applaud us for breaking the iron ring of imperialist ties, of sordid imperialist treaties, of imperialist chains—for breaking through to freedom, and making the heaviest sacrifices in doing so—for, as a socialist republic, although torn and plundered by the imperialists, keeping *out* of the imperialist war and raising the banner of peace, the banner of socialism for the whole world to see.

Small wonder that the international imperialist gang hates us for this, that it "accuses" us, that all the lackeys of the imperialists, including our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, also "accuse" us. The hatred these watchdogs of imperialism express for the Bolsheviks, and the sympathy of the class-conscious workers of the world, convince us more than ever of the justice of our cause.

A real socialist would not fail to understand that for the sake of achieving victory over the bourgeoisie, for the sake of power passing to the workers, for the sake of *starting* the world proletarian revolution, we can*not* and must *not* hesitate to make the heaviest sacrifices, including the sacrifice of part of our territory, the sacrifice of heavy defeats at the hands of imperialism. A real socialist would have proved by *deeds* his willingness for "his" country to make the greatest sacrifice to give a real push forward to the cause of the socialist revolution.

For the sake of "their" cause, that is, for the sake of winning world hegemony, the imperialists of Britain and Germany have not hesitated to utterly ruin and throttle a whole number of countries, from Belgium and Serbia to Palestine and Mesopotamia. But must socialists wait with "their" cause, the cause of liberating the working people of the whole world from the yoke of capital, of winning universal and lasting peace, until a path without sacrifice is found? Must they fear to open the battle until an easy victory is "guaranteed"? Must they place the integrity and security of "their" bourgeois-created "fatherland" above the interests of the world socialist revolution? The scoundrels in the international socialist movement who think this way, those lackeys who grovel to bourgeois morality, thrice stand condemned.

The Anglo-French and American imperialist vultures "accuse" us of concluding an "agreement" with German imperialism. What hypocrites, what scoundrels they are to slander the workers' government while trembling because of the sympathy displayed towards us by the workers of "their own" countries! But their hypocrisy will be exposed. They pretend not to see the difference between an agreement entered into by "socialists" with the bourgeoisie (their own or foreign) *against the workers*, against the working people, and an agreement entered into *for the protection* of the workers who have defeated their bourgeoisie, with the bourgeoisie of one national colour *against the bourgeoisie* of another colour in order that the proletariat may take advantage of the antagonisms between the different groups of bourgeoisie.

In actual fact, every European sees this difference very well, and, as I shall show in a moment, the American people have had a particularly striking "illustration" of it in their own history. There are agreements and agreements, there are *fagots et fagots*, as the French say.

When in February 1918 the German imperialist vultures hurled their forces against unarmed, demobilised Russia, who had relied on the international solidarity of the proletariat before the world revolution had fully matured, I did not hesitate for a moment to enter into an "agreement" with the French monarchists. Captain Sadoul, a French army officer who, in words, sympathised with the Bolsheviks, but was in deeds a loyal and faithful servant of French imperialism, brought the French officer de Lubersac to see me. "I am a monarchist. My only aim is to secure the defeat of Germany," de Lubersac declared to me. "That goes without saying (*cela va sans dire*)," I replied. But this did not in the least prevent me from entering into an "agreement" with de Lubersac concerning certain services that French army officers, experts in explosives, were ready to render us by blowing up railway lines in order to hinder the German invasion. This is an example of an "agreement" of which every class-conscious worker will approve, an agreement in the interests of socialism. The French monarchist and I shook hands, although we knew that each of us would willingly hang his "partner". But for a time our interests coincided. Against the advancing rapacious Germans, *we*, in the interests of the Russian and the world socialist revolution, utilised the equally rapacious counter-interests of *other* imperialists. In this way we served the interests of the working class of Russia and of other countries, we strengthened the proletariat and weakened the bourgeoisie of the whole world, we resorted to the methods, most legitimate and essential in *every* war, of manoeuvre, stratagem, retreat, in anticipation of the moment when the rapidly maturing proletarian revolution in a number of advanced countries *completely matured.*

However much the Anglo-French and American imperialist sharks fume with rage, however much they slander us, no matter how many millions they spend on bribing the Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Menshevik and other social-patriotic newspapers, *I shall not hesitate one second* to enter into a *similar* "agreement" with the German imperialist vultures if an attack upon Russia by Anglo-French troops calls for it. And I know perfectly well that my tactics will be approved by the class-conscious proletariat of Russia, Germany, France, Britain, America—in short, of the whole civilised world. Such tactics will ease the task of the socialist revolution, will hasten it, will weaken the international bourgeoisie, will strengthen the position of the working class which is defeating the bourgeoisie.

The American people resorted to these tactics long ago to the advantage of their revolution. When they waged their great war of liberation against the British oppressors, they had also against them the French and the Spanish oppressors who owned a part of what is now the United States of North America. In their arduous war for freedom, the American people also entered into "agreements" with some oppressors against others for the purpose of weakening the oppressors and strengthening those who were fighting in a revolutionary manner against oppression, for the purpose of serving the interests of the oppressed *people*. The American people took advantage of the strife between the French, the Spanish and the British; sometimes they even fought side by side with the forces of the French and Spanish oppressors against the British oppressors; first they defeated the British and then freed themselves (partly by ransom) from the French and the Spanish.

Historical action is not the pavement of Nevsky Prospekt, said the great Russian revolutionary Chernyshevsky.[121] A revolutionary would not "agree" to a proletarian revolution only "on the condition" that it proceeds easily and smoothly, that there is, from the outset, combined action on the part of the proletarians of different countries, that there are guarantees against defeats, that the road of the revolution is broad, free and straight, that it will not be necessary during the march to victory to sustain the heaviest casualties, to "bide one's time in a besieged fortress", or to make one's way along extremely narrow, impassable, winding and dangerous mountain tracks. Such a person is no revolutionary, he has not freed himself from the pedantry of the bourgeois intellectuals; such a person will be found constantly slipping into the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, like our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and even (although more rarely) Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Pravda No. 178,
August 22, 1918

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 63-68

From SPEECH IN POLYTECHNICAL MUSEUM AUGUST 23, 1918

(*Stormy applause.*) What is the essence of our programme? Winning socialism. There is no way out of the world war at this moment except by the victory of socialism. But many do not realise this. Most people all over the world now oppose this bloody slaughter, but they cannot see its direct connection with the capitalist system. The horrors of this war are obvious even to the bourgeoisie, but you cannot expect them to associate the end of the war with the end of capitalism.... This, however, is the fundamental idea which has always distinguished the Bolsheviks, and the revolutionary socialists of all other countries, from those who would like to bring peace on earth while leaving the capitalist system intact.

What are wars fought for? We know the majority of wars were fought in the interests of dynasties, and were called dynastic wars. But some wars were fought in the interests of the oppressed. Spartacus set off a war in defence of the enslaved class. Wars of this nature were waged in the period of colonial oppression continuing to this day, in the period of slavery, etc. These wars were just wars and must not be condemned.

But when we talk about the present European war and condemn it, we do so only because it is being waged by the oppressor class.

What is the aim of the present war? If we are to believe the diplomats of all countries, it is being fought by France and Britain to defend the small nations from the barbarians, the German Huns. Germany, for her part, is fighting the

Cossack barbarians who are menacing the civilised German people, and is defending the fatherland from the enemy attack.

But we know this war was carefully prepared, it matured and became inevitable. It was just as inevitable as war is between America and Japan. Why?

Because capitalism has concentrated the earth's wealth in the hands of a few states and divided the world up to the last little bit. Any further division, any further enrichment could take place only at the expense of others, as the enrichment of one state at the expense of another. The issue could only be settled by force—and, accordingly, war between the world marauders became inevitable.

This war has up to now been headed by two principal firms—Britain and Germany. Britain was the strongest of the colonialist countries. Although her population is not more than 40,000,000, that of her colonies exceeds 400,000,000. Long ago she took by force the colonies of others; she seized vast territories and exploited them. But economically she fell behind Germany during the last fifty years. German industry overhauled British industry. Germany's large-scale state capitalism combined with the bureaucracy—and Germany beat all records.

The rivalry for supremacy between these two giants could only be settled by force.

There was a time when Britain, by dint of her might, seized territory from Holland, Portugal and other countries. Then Germany appeared on the scene and declared that it was now her turn to enrich herself at the expense of others.

That is the root of the matter—the struggle between the strongest powers for the division of the world. And as both sides possess hundreds of millions of capital, their struggle has become world-wide.

We know how many secret crimes have been committed in connection with this war. The secret treaties we have published show that the lofty reasons given for the war are just a lot of empty talk, and that, just like Russia, all the states were involved in sordid treaties for getting rich at the expense of small and weak nations. The result was that those who were strong grew richer still, while those who were weak were crushed.

Individuals cannot be blamed for starting the war; it would be wrong to blame kings and tsars for having brought about this holocaust—it was brought about by capital. Capitalism has turned into a blind alley. This blind alley is imperialism, which dictated war among the rivals for world supremacy.

The claim that the war is being waged for the liberation of small nations is a monstrous lie. Both sets of marauders continue to stand glaring bloodthirstily at each other, while about them many a small nation lies crushed.

Brief report published in *Izvestia* No. 182, August 24, 1918
First published in full in 1926
in N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov),
Works, Vol. XX, Part II

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 79-81

From SPEECH AT A PRESNYA DISTRICT WORKERS' CONFERENCE DECEMBER 14, 1918

Even though the British and French papers hide the truth, it seems to be making some headway. The workers sense and realise that the revolution in Russia is theirs, a workingman's. socialist revolution. Even in France and Britain the labour movement is now carrying such slogans as "Withdraw the forces from Russia!" and "He who makes war against Russia is a criminal!" A socialist rally was recently held in London's Albert Hall and according to information received, which the British Government tried hard to repress, the rally demanded "Withdraw the forces from Russia!" and all the workers' leaders condemned the government policy as robbery and violence. We also have news that Maclean, who was a Scottish schoolmaster at one time, called the workers out on strike in the principal industrial districts, condemning the war as a war of plunder. He had been in prison earlier. Then he was put in again. But when the revolutionary movement flared up in Europe, Maclean was let out and put up as parliamentary candidate in Glasgow, one of the biggest cities in the North of England and Scotland. This shows that the British labour movement and its revolutionary demands are having a bigger impact. The British Government was forced to set Maclean free, its rabid enemy, a man who is proud to call himself a British Bolshevik.

In France, where the workers are still affected by chauvinism, and where they still think the war is being waged only for the defence of the country, a revolutionary mood is growing. Now, when Britain and France have beaten the Germans, they, as you know, have presented them with terms a hundred times harsher[122] than those of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. Today, revolution in Europe has become a reality. The Allies, who boasted they were bringing Germany freedom from the Kaiser and militarism, have fallen to the role once played by the Russian troops in Nicholas I's time, when Russia was in the dark, when Nicholas I drove the Russian troops to stifle the Hungarian revolution. That was under serfdom over 60 years ago. Yet today, free Britain and other countries have turned into hangmen and think they are strong enough to stifle the revolution and repress the truth. But this truth will overcome all the obstacles both in France and Britain, and the workers will realise they have been deceived and inveigled into a war for robbing another country, and not for freeing France or Britain. From France we now hear there are people in the Socialist Party, which had previously supported defence of the fatherland, who warmly welcome the Soviet Republic and protest against military intervention in Russia.

Brief report published in *Pravda*
No. 275, December 18, 1918
First published in full in the
Fourth Russian Edition of Lenin's
Collected Works

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 356-57

From REPLIES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AT THE SESSION OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET

MARCH 12, 1919

Under capitalism quite a number of workers in big cities lived by producing articles of luxury. In the Soviet Republic we shall have to leave these workers unemployed for a time. We shall say to them, "Get down to some other, useful work." And the worker will say, "I did delicate work, I was a jeweller, it was clean work, I worked for gentlemen; now the muzhik is in power, the gentlemen have been scattered and I want to go back to capitalism." Such people will preach going back to capitalism, or, as the Mensheviks say, going forward to healthy capitalism and sound democracy. A few hundred workers are to be found who will say, "We lived well under a healthy capitalism." The people who lived well under capitalism were an insignificant minority—we defend the interests of the majority that lived badly under capitalism. (*Applause.*) Healthy capitalism led to world slaughter in the countries with the greatest freedom. There can be no healthy capitalism, there can be capitalism of the sort obtaining in the freest republic, one like the American republic, cultured, rich, technically developed; and that democratic and most republican capitalism led to the most savage world slaughter over the plunder of the whole world. Out of fifteen million workers you will find a few thousand who lived well under capitalism. In the rich countries there are more such workers because they work for a greater number of millionaires and multimillionaires. They served that handful and received particularly high wages from them. Take hundreds of British millionaires—they have accumulated thousands of millions because they have plundered India and a large number of colonies. It meant nothing to them to make gifts to 10,000 or 20,000 workers, giving them double or higher wages so that they would work well for them. I once read the reminiscences of an American barber whom a multimillionaire paid a dollar a day to shave him. And that barber wrote a whole book praising that multimillionaire and his own wonderful life. For a daily visit of one hour to his financial majesty he received a dollar, was satisfied and did not want anything but capitalism. We have to be on our guard against such an argument. The vast majority of workers were not in such a position. We, the Communists of the whole world, defend the interests of the vast majority of working people, and it was a small minority of working people whom the capitalists bribed with high wages and made them the loyal servants of capital. Under serfdom there were people, peasants, who said to the landowners, "We are your slaves (that was after emancipation), we shall not leave you." Were there many of them? An insignificant few. Can you deny that there was a struggle against serfdom by reference to them? Of course not. And today communism cannot be denied by reference to the minority of workers who earned good money on bourgeois newspapers, on the production of articles of luxury and for their personal services to multimillionaires.

First published in the Fourth Russian Edition of Lenin' *Collected Works* according to the verbatim report

Collected Works, Vol. 29, pp. 28-30

From SPEECH ON THE ORGANISATION OF A FARM LABOURERS' UNION DELIVERED AT THE SESSION OF THE FIRST CONGRESS OF FARM LABOURERS OF PETROGRAD GUBERNIA

MARCH 13, 1919

Quite recently I had a conversation with a prominent Englishman who came to Russia during the war. In the past he sided with capitalism, but in the course of our revolution he developed splendidly, first into a Menshevik and later into a Bolshevik. During our conversation we discussed labour conditions in England—there are no peasants in England, there are only big capitalists and farm workers—and he said, "I am not hopeful, because our farm labourers live under feudal and not capitalist conditions; they are so overburdened, crushed and ground down by toil, that it is difficult for them to unite." And this is in a most advanced country, where a certain farm labourer attempted to form a farm labourers' union quite half a century ago. This is what progress amounts to in the free capitalist countries!

First published in full in the journal *Rabotnik Zemli i Lesa* No. 4-5, 1923	*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 39

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

The imperialists of the Entente countries are blockading Russia in an effort to cut off the Soviet Republic, as a seat of infection, from the capitalist world. These people, who boast about their "democratic" institutions, are so blinded by their hatred of the Soviet Republic that they do not see how ridiculous they are making themselves. Just think of it, the advanced, most civilised and "democratic" countries, armed to the teeth and enjoying undivided military sway over the whole world, are mortally afraid of the *ideological* infection coming from a ruined, starving, backward, and even, they assert, semi-savage country!

This contradiction alone is opening the eyes of the working masses in all countries and helping to expose the hypocrisy of the imperialists Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson and their governments.

We are being helped, however, not only by the capitalists' blind hatred of the Soviets, but also by their bickering among themselves, which induces them to put spokes in each other's wheels. They have entered into a veritable conspiracy of silence, for they are desperately afraid of the spread of true information about the Soviet Republic in general, and of its official documents in particular. Yet, *Le Temps*, the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, has published a report on the foundation in Moscow of the Third, Communist International.

For this we express our most respectful thanks to the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, to this leader of French chauvinism and imperialism. We are prepared to send an illuminated address to *Le Temps* in token of our appreciation of the effective and able assistance it is giving us.

The manner in which *Le Temps* compiled its report on the basis of our wireless messages clearly and fully reveals the motive that prompted this organ of the money-bags. It wanted to have a dig at Wilson, as if to say, "Look at the people with whom you negotiate!" The wiseacres who write to the order of the money-bags do not see that their attempt to frighten Wilson with the Bolshevik bogey is becoming, in the eyes of the working people, an advertisement for the Bolsheviks. Once more, our most respectful thanks to the organ of the French millionaires!

The Third International has been founded in a world situation that does not allow prohibitions, petty and miserable devices of the Entente imperialists or of capitalist lackeys like the Scheidemanns in Germany and the Renners in Austria to prevent news of this International and sympathy for it spreading among the working class of the world. This situation has been brought about by the growth of the proletarian revolution, which is manifestly developing everywhere by leaps and bounds. It has been brought about by the *Soviet* movement among the working people, which has already achieved such strength as to become really *international*.

The First International (1864-72) laid the foundation of an international organisation of the workers for the preparation of their revolutionary attack on capital. The Second International (1889-1914) was an international organisation of the proletarian movement whose growth proceeded in *breadth*, at the cost of a temporary drop in the revolutionary level, a temporary strengthening of opportunism, which in the end led to the disgraceful collapse of this International.

The Third International actually emerged in 1918, when the long years of struggle against opportunism and social-chauvinism, especially during the war, led to the formation of Communist Parties in a number of countries. Officially, the Third International was founded at its First Congress, in March 1919, in Moscow. And the most characteristic feature of this International, its mission of fulfilling, of implementing the precepts of Marxism, and of achieving the age-old ideals of socialism and the working-class movement—this most characteristic feature of the Third International has manifested itself immediately in the fact that the new, third, "International Working Men's Association" *has already* *begun to develop*, to a certain extent, into a *union of Soviet Socialist Republics.*

The First International laid the foundations of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism.

The Second International marked a period in which the soil was prepared for the broad, mass spread of the movement in a number of countries.

The Third International has gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to implement* the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The international alliance of the parties which are leading the most revolutionary movement in the world, the movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, now rests on an unprecedentedly firm base, in the shape of several *Soviet republics*, which are implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat and are the embodiment of victory over capitalism on an international scale.

The epoch-making significance of the Third, Communist International lies in its having begun to give effect to Marx's cardinal slogan, the slogan which sums up the centuries-old development of socialism and the working-class movement, the slogan which is expressed in the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This prevision and this theory—the prevision and theory of a genius—are becoming a reality.

The Latin words have now been translated into the languages of all the peoples of contemporary Europe—more, into all the languages of the world.

A new era in world history has begun.

Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage, slavery.

By emancipating himself from slavery, man is for the first time advancing to real freedom.

How is it that one of the most backward countries of Europe was the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to organise a Soviet republic? We shall hardly be wrong if we say that it is this contradiction between the backwardness of Russia and the "leap" she has made over bourgeois democracy to the highest form of democracy, to Soviet, or proletarian, democracy—it is this contradiction that has been one of the reasons (apart from the dead weight of opportunist habits and philistine prejudices that burdened the majority of the socialist leaders) why people in the West have had particular difficulty or have been slow in understanding the role of the Soviets.

The working people all over the world have instinctively grasped the significance of the Soviets as an instrument in the proletarian struggle and as a form of the proletarian state. But the "leaders", corrupted by opportunism, still continue to worship bourgeois democracy, which they call "democracy" in general.

Is it surprising that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat has brought out primarily the "contradiction" between the backwardness of Russia and her "leap" *over* bourgeois democracy? It would have been surprising had history granted us the establishment of a *new* form of democracy *without* a number of contradictions.

If any Marxist, or any person, indeed, who has a general knowledge of modern science, were asked whether it is likely that the transition of the different capitalist countries to the dictatorship of the proletariat will take place in an identical or harmoniously proportionate way, his answer would undoubtedly be in the negative. There never has been and never could be even, harmonious, or proportionate development in the capitalist world. Each country has developed more strongly first one, then another aspect or feature or group of features of capitalism and of the working-class movement. The process of development has been uneven.

When France was carrying out her great bourgeois revolution and rousing the whole European continent to a historically new life, Britain proved to be at the head of the counter-revolutionary coalition, although at the same time she was much more developed capitalistically than France. The British working-class movement of that period, however, brilliantly anticipated much that was contained in the future Marxism.

When Britain gave the world Chartism, the first broad, truly mass and politically organised proletarian revolutionary movement, bourgeois revolutions, most of them weak, were taking place on the European continent, and the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had broken out in France. The bourgeoisie defeated the various national contingents of the proletariat one by one, in different ways in different countries.

Britain was the model of a country in which, as Engels put it, the bourgeoisie had produced, alongside a bourgeois aristocracy, a very bourgeois upper stratum of the proletariat.[123] For several decades this advanced capitalist country lagged behind in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. France seemed to have exhausted the strength of the proletariat in two heroic working-class revolts of 1848 and 1871 against the bourgeoisie that made very considerable contributions to world-historical development. Leadership in the International of the working-class movement then passed to Germany; that was in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when she lagged economically behind Britain and France. But when Germany had outstripped these two countries economically, i.e., by the second decade of the twentieth century, the Marxist workers' party of Germany, that model for the whole world, found itself headed by a handful of utter scoundrels, the most filthy blackguards—from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legien—loathsome hangmen drawn from the workers' ranks who had sold themselves to the capitalists, who were in the service of the monarchy and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

World history is leading unswervingly towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but is doing so by paths that are anything but smooth, simple and straight.

When Karl Kautsky was still a Marxist and not the renegade from Marxism he became when he began to champion unity with the Scheidemanns and to support bourgeois democracy against Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, he wrote an article—this was at the turn of the century—entitled "The Slavs and Revolution". In this article he traced the historical conditions that pointed to the possibility of leadership in the world revolutionary movement passing to the Slavs.

And so it has. Leadership in the revolutionary proletarian International has passed for a time—for a short time, it goes without saying—to the Russians, just as at various periods of the nineteenth century it was in the hands of the British, then of the French, then of the Germans.

I have had occasion more than once to say that it was easier for the Russians than for the advanced countries *to begin* the great proletarian revolution, but that it will be more difficult for them *to continue* it and carry it to final victory, in the sense of the complete organisation of a socialist society.

It was easier for us to begin, firstly, because the unusual—for twentieth-century Europe—political backwardness of the tsarist monarchy gave unusual strength to the revolutionary onslaught of the masses. Secondly, Russia's backwardness merged in a peculiar way the proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie with the peasant revolution against the landowners. That is what we started from in October 1917, and we would not have achieved victory so easily then if we had not. As long ago as 1856, Marx spoke, in reference to Prussia, of the possibility of a peculiar combination of proletarian revolution and peasant war.[124] From the beginning of 1905 the Bolsheviks advocated the idea of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Thirdly, the 1905 revolution contributed enormously to the political education of the worker and peasant masses, because it familiarised their vanguard with "the last word" of socialism in the West and also because of the revolutionary *action* of the masses. Without such a "dress rehearsal" as we had in 1905, the revolutions of 1917—both the bourgeois, February revolution, and the proletarian, October revolution—would have been impossible. Fourthly, Russia's geographical conditions permitted her to hold out longer than other countries could have done against the superior military strength of the capitalist, advanced countries. Fifthly, the specific attitude of the proletariat towards the peasantry facilitated the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the socialist revolution, made it easier for the urban proletarians to influence the semi-proletarian, poorer sections of the rural working people. Sixthly, long schooling in strike action and the experience of the European mass working-class movement facilitated the emergence—in a profound and rapidly intensifying revolutionary situation—of such a unique form of proletarian revolutionary organisation as the *Soviets*.

This list, of course, is incomplete; but it will suffice for the time being.

Soviet, or proletarian, democracy was born in Russia. Following the Paris Commune a second epoch-making step was taken. The proletarian and peasant Soviet Republic has proved to be the first stable socialist republic in the world. As a *new type of state* it cannot die. It no longer stands alone.

For the continuance and completion of the work of building socialism, much, very much is still required. Soviet republics in more developed countries, where the proletariat has greater weight and influence, have every chance of surpassing Russia once they take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bankrupt Second International is now dying and rotting alive. Actually, it is playing the role of lackey to the world bourgeoisie. It is a truly yellow International. Its foremost ideological leaders, such as Kautsky, laud *bourgeois* democracy and call it "democracy" in general, or—what is still more stupid and still more crude—"pure democracy".

Bourgeois democracy has outlived its day, just as the Second International has, though the International performed historically necessary and useful work when the task of the moment was to train the working-class masses within the framework of this bourgeois democracy.

No bourgeois republic, however democratic, ever was or could have been anything but a machine for the suppression of the working people by capital, an instrument of the political rule of capital, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The democratic bourgeois republic promised and proclaimed majority rule, but it could never put this into effect as long as private ownership of the land and other means of production existed.

"Freedom" in the bourgeois-democratic republic was actually freedom *for the rich.* The proletarians and working peasants could and should have utilised it for the purpose of preparing their forces to overthrow capital, to overcome bourgeois democracy, but *in fact* the working masses were, as a general rule, unable to enjoy democracy under capitalism.

Soviet, or proletarian, democracy has for the first time in the world created *democracy* for the masses, for the working people, for the factory workers and small peasants.

Never yet has the world seen political power wielded by the *majority* of the population, power *actually* wielded by this majority, as it is in the case of Soviet rule.

It suppresses the "freedom" of the exploiters and their accomplices; it deprives them of "freedom" to exploit, "freedom" to batten on starvation, "freedom" to fight for the restoration of the rule of capital, "freedom" to compact with the foreign bourgeoisie against the workers and peasants of their own country.

Let the Kautskys champion such freedom. Only a renegade from Marxism, a renegade from socialism can do so.

In nothing is the bankruptcy of the ideological leaders of the Second International, people like Hilferding and Kautsky, so strikingly expressed as in their utter inability to understand the significance of Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, its relation to the Paris Commune, its place in history, its necessity as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The newspaper *Die Freiheit*, organ of the "Independent" (alias middle-class, philistine, petty-bourgeois) German Social-Democratic Party, in its issue No. 74 of February 11, 1919, published a manifesto "To the Revolutionary Proletariat of Germany".

This manifesto is signed by the Party executive and by all its members in the National Assembly, the German variety of our Constituent Assembly.

This manifesto accuses the Scheidemanns of wanting to abolish the *Workers' Councils*, and proposes—don't laugh!—that the Councils be *combined* with the Assembly, that the Councils be granted certain political rights, a certain place in the Constitution.

To reconcile, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat! How simple! What a brilliantly philistine idea!

The only pity is that it was tried in Russia, under Kerensky, by the united Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, those petty-bourgeois democrats who imagine themselves socialists.

Anyone who has read Marx and failed to understand that in capitalist society, at every acute moment, in every serious class conflict, the alternative is either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat, has understood nothing of either the economic or the political doctrines of Marx.

But the brilliantly philistine idea of Hilferding, Kautsky and Co. of peacefully combining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat requires special examination, if exhaustive treatment is to be given to the economic and political absurdities with which this most remarkable and comical manifesto of February 11 is packed. That will have to be put off for another article.

Moscow, April 15, 1919

Published in May 1919 in the journal *Communist International* No. 1	*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 305-13

THE TASKS OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

(Ramsay MacDonald on the Third International)

The French social-chauvinist newspaper *l'Humanité*, issue No. 5475, dated April 14, 1919, contains an editorial by Ramsay MacDonald, the well-known leader of the British so-called Independent Labour Party, which is actually an opportunist party that has always been dependent on the bourgeoisie. This article is so typical of the position taken by the *trend* which it is customary to call the Centre and which was called by that name at the First Congress of the Communist International in Moscow that we quote it *in full* together with the introductory lines of the *l'Humanité* editorial board:

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

Our friend Ramsay MacDonald was the authoritative leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons before the war. A socialist and a man of convictions, he considered it his duty to condemn the war as imperialist, in contrast to those who welcomed it as a war for a righteous cause. Consequently, after August 4 he resigned from his position of leader of the Labour Party, and together with comrades in the Independent Labour Party and with Keir Hardie whom we all admire, did not fear to declare war on war.

This required day-to-day heroism.

MacDonald showed by his example that courage, in the words of Jaurès, "consists in not submitting to the law of the triumphant lie and in not serving as the echo of the applause of imbeciles and the catcalling of fanatics".

In the khaki* election held at the end of November, MacDonald was defeated by Lloyd George. But we may rest assured that MacDonald will have his revenge, and that in the very near future.

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* Called "khaki" election by soldiers who were ordered to vote for the Government candidates.

The rise of separatist tendencies in the national and international policies of socialism has been a misfortune for the socialist movement.

It is, however, not a bad thing that there are shades of opinion and variations of method within socialism. Our socialism is still in the experimental stage.

Its basic principles are fixed, but the method of best applying them, the combinations which will bring about the triumph of the revolution, the manner in which the socialist state is to be built are still problems to be discussed, and the last word concerning them has not yet been spoken. Only deep study of all these points can lead us to sublimer truth.

Extremes may clash, and such a struggle may serve to fortify socialist views; but evil commences when everybody considers his opponent a traitor, a believer fallen from grace, one who deserves to have the gates of the party paradise slammed in his face.

When socialists are possessed by the spirit of dogmatism, like that which in former days of Christianity preached civil war for the greater glory of God and the discomfiture of the devil, the bourgeoisie may sleep in peace, for the days of its rule are not yet ended, no matter how great the local and international successes achieved by socialism.

At the present moment our movement is unfortunately encountering a new obstacle. A new International has been proclaimed in Moscow.

I am very much grieved over this, for the Socialist International is at present sufficiently open to all forms of socialist thought, and in spite of all theoretical and practical disagreements engendered within it by Bolshevism I see no reason why its Left wing should separate from the Centre and form an independent group.

It must first of all be remembered that we are still living in the infancy of the revolution. The forms of government that have sprung up from the political and social debris wrought by the war have not yet stood the test and have not yet been definitely established.

A new broom sweeps remarkably clean at first, but nobody can be certain beforehand how it will work in the end.

Russia is not Hungary, Hungary is not France, France is not Britain, and therefore anyone who introduces a split in the International after the experience of some one nation displays criminal narrow-mindedness.

Besides, what is Russia's experience really worth? Who can answer that? The Allied governments are afraid to let us enlighten ourselves. But there are two things we do know.

First and foremost, that there was no prepared plan according to which the revolution was accomplished by the present Russian Government. It developed according to the course of events. Lenin started his attack on Kerensky by demanding a Constituent Assembly. Events led him to suppress this Assembly. When the socialist revolution broke out in Russia no one thought the Soviets would take the place in the government which they did.

Subsequently Lenin quite justly exhorted Hungary not to copy Russia slavishly but to allow the Hungarian revolution to evolve freely according to its own character.

The evolution and fluctuations of those experiments we are now witnessing should on no account call forth a split in the International.

All socialist governments need the help and advice of the International. It is necessary that the International should watch their experiences with an alert eye and an open mind.

I have just heard from a friend who recently saw Lenin that no one is more free in his criticism of the Soviet Government than Lenin himself.

* *
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If the post-war disorders and revolutions do not justify a split, does the latter not find justification in the attitude which some socialist factions took during the war? I frankly admit that here the grounds may seem more justified. But if there really is some excuse for split in the International, this question was at any rate presented most unhappily at the Moscow Conference.

I am one of those who consider that the discussion at the Berne Conference on who was responsible for the war *was merely a concession to non-socialist public opinion.*

At Berne it was not only impossible to adopt a decision on this question that would be of some historical value (although it might have some political value), but even the question itself was not broached properly.

The condemnation of the German majority (a condemnation which that majority fully deserved and with which I have very gladly associated myself) could not serve as an exposition of the origin of the war.

The Berne debate was not accompanied by a frank discussion of the views held by other socialists concerning the war.

It produced no formula of conduct for socialists during a war. All the International had said before then was that in a war of national defence socialists must unite with the other parties.

Under these circumstances whom are we going to condemn?

Some of us knew that what the International decided meant nothing and did not constitute a practical guide for action.

We knew that such a war would end in victory for imperialism and, being neither pacifists in the usual sense of the word nor anti-pacifists, we pursued a policy which in our opinion was the only one compatible with internationalism. *But the International* never prescribed any such rule of conduct for us.

That is why the moment the war began the International collapsed. It lost its authority and did not issue a single decision on the basis of which we would now have the right to condemn those who honestly carried out the resolutions of the international congresses.

In consequence, the attitude we should adopt today is the following: instead of parting ways on account of what has taken place, let us create a really active International which will guard the socialist movement during the period of revolution and reconstruction which we have now entered.

We must restore our socialist principles. We must place our international socialist conduct on firm foundations.

If, however, it appears that we differ essentially on these principles, if we do not arrive at any agreement on the issues of freedom and democracy, if our views on the conditions under which the proletariat may take power are definitely at variance, if finally it turns out that the war has infected some sections of the International with the virus of imperialism, then a split is possible.

But I do not think there should be such a calamity.

That is why I regret the Moscow Manifesto as being premature, to say the least, and certainly useless; and I hope that my French comrades, upon whom as well as upon me during the sombre last four years so much slander and misfortune has been heaped, will not, in an outburst of impatience, be instrumental in breaking up international solidarity.

Otherwise their children will have to set up that solidarity once more, if the proletariat is ever to rule the world.

J. Ramsay MacDonald

The author of this article, as the reader can see, tries to prove that a split is unnecessary. However, its inevitability follows from the very *way* the argument is presented by Ramsay MacDonald—that typical representative of the Second International and worthy colleague of Scheidemann and Kautsky, Vandervelde and Branting, and so on and so forth.

Ramsay MacDonald's article is a fine specimen of the smooth, euphonious, hackneyed, apparently socialistic phrases which have long served in all the advanced capitalist countries to conceal bourgeois policy within the working-class movement.

I

Let us begin with what is least important but especially characteristic. Like Kautsky (in his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*), the author repeats the bourgeois lie that no one in Russia foresaw the role of the Soviets, that the Bolsheviks and I began to fight Kerensky only on the issue of the Constituent Assembly.

That is a bourgeois lie. Actually, as early as April 4, 1917, the first day after my arrival in Petrograd, I presented "theses" containing the demand for a *Soviet*, and not a *bourgeois-parliamentary*, republic. I repeated this many times under Kerensky in the press and at meetings. The Bolshevik Party solemnly and officially announced this in the decisions of its conference of April 29, 1917. Who does not know this does *not want* to know the truth about the socialist revolution in Russia. If one does not want to understand that a bourgeois-parliamentary republic with a Constituent Assembly is a step forward from the same sort of republic *without* a Constituent Assembly, and that a *Soviet* republic is two steps forward, one is merely closing one's eyes to the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

To call oneself a socialist and not to see this difference two years after the issue was raised in Russia and one and a half years after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia means stubbornly to remain completely captive to "non-socialist public opinion", *that is to say*, to the ideas and the policy of the bourgeoisie.

A split with such people is necessary and inevitable, for it is impossible to accomplish the socialist revolution if you join hands with those who pull in the direction of the bourgeoisie.

And if "leaders" like Ramsay MacDonald or Kautsky, etc., have refused to overcome even so very small a "difficulty" as an acquaintance with the *documents* concerning the attitude of the Bolsheviks toward Soviet power, concerning the way this problem was posed before and after October 25 (November 7), 1917, would it not be ridiculous to expect such people to be ready and able to overcome the incomparably greater difficulties of the real struggle for a socialist revolution?

There are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

II

Let us pass on to the second untruth (from among the countless untruths in which the whole article by Ramsay MacDonald abounds, for in this article there are perhaps more untruths than words). This untruth is probably the most important one.

Ramsay MacDonald asserts that until the war of 1914-18 the International only said that "in a war of national defence socialists must unite with the other parties."

That is a monstrous, a glaring deviation from the truth.

Everybody knows that the Basle Manifesto of 1912 was unanimously adopted by all socialists and that of all the documents of the International it alone refers precisely to the war between the British and German groups of imperialist predators, which in 1912 everybody clearly saw was in preparation and which broke out in 1914. It was about this war that the Basle Manifesto said three things which MacDonald now passes over in silence, thereby committing an enormous crime against socialism and proving that with people like him a split is necessary, because in fact they serve the bourgeoisie and not the proletariat.

These three things are the following:

the war that threatens cannot be justified one whit as being in the interest of national freedom;

in this war it would be a crime on the part of the workers to shoot at one another;

the war leads to proletarian revolution.

Here you have the three basic, fundamental truths, by "forgetting" which (though he put his signature to them before the war) MacDonald *in fact* is going over to the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and thereby proves that a split is necessary.

The Communist International will not agree to unity with parties which refuse to admit this truth and are incapable of demonstrating by their *deeds* their determination, readiness and ability to bring these truths home to the masses.

The Treaty of Versailles has proved even to the stupid and blind, even to the mass of short-sighted people, that the Entente was and is as bloody and filthy an imperialist predator as Germany. Only hypocrites and liars could fail to see this, people who deliberately conduct the policy of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement, direct agents and henchmen of the bourgeoisie (labour lieutenants of the capitalist class*, as the American Socialists say), or people who have so far succumbed to bourgeois ideas and bourgeois influence that they are socialists only in words, but in deeds are petty bourgeois, philistines, toadies to the capitalists. The difference between the first and the second category is important from the viewpoint of their personalities, i.e., for an appraisal of the Tom, Dick or Harry of the social-chauvinists of all countries. For the politician, i.e., from the viewpoint of the relations among millions of people, among the classes, this difference is not substantial.

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* These words are in English in the original.—*Ed.*

Those socialists who during the war of 1914-18 failed to understand that it was a criminal, reactionary, predatory, imperialist war on both sides, are social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in words and chauvinists in deeds; friends of the working class in words, but in deeds lackeys of "their own" national bourgeoisie, individuals who help to deceive the people by depicting as "national", "emancipatory", "defensive", "righteous" and so forth the war between the British and German groups of imperialist predators, who are *equally* filthy, selfish, blood-thirsty, criminal, reactionary.

Unity with the social-chauvinists is betrayal of the revolution, betrayal of the proletariat, betrayal of socialism, desertion to the bourgeoisie, because it is "unity" with the *national bourgeoisie* of "one's own" country *against* the unity of the international revolutionary proletariat, is unity *with* the bourgeoisie *against* the proletariat.

The war of 1914-18 has definitely proved this. Let anyone who does not understand this remain in the yellow Berne International of traitor-socialists.[125]

III

Ramsay MacDonald, with the amusing naïveté of a "drawing-room" socialist who carelessly uses words without at all understanding their serious significance, giving no thought whatever to the fact that *words commit one to deeds*, declares that in Berne "a concession to non-socialist public opinion" was made.

Precisely! We regard the whole of the Berne International as yellow, treacherous and perfidious because the *whole* of its policy is a "*concession*" to the bourgeoisie.

Ramsay MacDonald knows perfectly well that we have built the Third International and broken unreservedly with the Second International because we became convinced that it was hopeless, incorrigible, played the part of a servant to imperialism, of a vehicle of bourgeois influence, bourgeois lies and bourgeois corruption in the labour movement. If in desiring to discuss the Third International Ramsay MacDonald evades the substance of the matter, beats about the bush, utters empty phrases and does not speak of what should be spoken about, that is his fault and his crime. For the proletariat needs the truth, and there is nothing more harmful to its cause than plausible, respectable, petty-bourgeois lies.

The problem of imperialism and of *its connection* with opportunism in the labour movement, with the betrayal of the workers' cause by labour leaders, was raised long ago, very long ago.

For a period of *forty* years, from 1852 to 1892, Marx and Engels constantly pointed to the fact that the upper stratum of the British working class was becoming increasingly *bourgeois* as a consequence of the country's peculiar economic conditions (colonies, monopoly of the world market, etc.). In the seventies of last century Marx won himself the honourable hatred of the despicable heroes of the Berne International trend of those days, of the opportunists and reformists, for branding many of the British trade union leaders as men who had sold themselves to the bourgeoisie or were in its pay for services rendered to *its* class *from within* the labour movement.

During the Anglo-Boer War, the Anglo-Saxon press quite clearly raised the problem of imperialism as the latest (*and last*) stage of capitalism. If my memory serves me right, it was none other than Ramsay MacDonald who then resigned from the Fabian Society, that prototype of the Berne International, that nursery and model of opportunism, which Engels describes, with the power, brilliancy and truth of genius, in his correspondence with Sorge. "Fabian imperialism"—such was the common expression employed at that time in British socialist literature.

If Ramsay MacDonald has forgotten this, all the worse for him.

"Fabian imperialism" and "social-imperialism" are one and the same thing: socialism in words, imperialism in deeds, *the growth of opportunism into imperialism*. This has now become, during the war of 1914-18 and since, a *universal* fact. The failure to understand it shows the great blindness of the Berne yellow International, and is its great crime. Opportunism, or reformism, inevitably had to grow into a phenomenon of world-wide importance, *socialist imperialism*, or social-chauvinism, because imperialism brought to the fore a handful of very rich, advanced nations, engaged in plundering the whole world, and thereby enabled the bourgeoisie of those countries, out of their monopolist superprofits (imperialism is monopoly capitalism), *to bribe the upper strata of the working class.*

Only ignoramuses or hypocrites who deceive the workers by repeating *platitudes* about capitalism and in this way cover up the bitter truth that *a whole trend in socialism* has gone over to the imperialist bourgeoisie could fail to see the economic inevitability of this development under imperialism.

And from this fact two indisputable conclusions emerge.

First conclusion: the Berne International is in fact, from the angle of its real historical and political role, and irrespective of the good will and pious wishes of particular members of it, *an organisation of agents of international imperialism* operating *within* the labour movement, permeating *that movement* with bourgeois influence, bourgeois ideas, bourgeois lies, and bourgeois corruption.

In countries where democratic parliamentary culture is of long standing, the bourgeoisie has learned splendidly to use deception, bribery and flattery in their most subtle forms as well as violence. Not for nothing have the "luncheons" given to British "labour leaders" (i.e., lieutenants of the bourgeoisie whose duty is to fool the workers) acquired notoriety; Engels in his day spoke about them. To the same category of facts belongs the "charming" reception given by M. Clemenceau to the traitor-socialist Merrheim, the courteous receptions given by Entente ministers to the leaders of the Berne International, and so on and so forth. "You train 'em, and we buy 'em," a clever capitalist, an Englishwoman, said to Mr. Social-imperialist Hyndman, who related in his memoirs how this lady, a person shrewder than all the leaders of the Berne International put together, appraised the "labours" of the socialist intellectuals in training workers to become socialist leaders.

During the war, when the Vanderveldes, Brantings and the whole gang of traitors organised "international" conferences, the French bourgeois newspapers were bitingly scornful, and rightly so. They said: "These Vanderveldes seem to be suffering from a sort of tic. Just as those who suffer from tic cannot utter a couple of phrases without strangely twitching the muscles of the face, so the Vanderveldes cannot make a political speech without repeating, parrot-like, the words internationalism, socialism, international working-class solidarity, proletarian revolution, etc. Let them repeat any sacramental formulas they like so long as they help to lead the workers by the nose and serve us, the capitalists, in waging the imperialist war and enslaving the workers."

Sometimes the British and French bourgeoisie are very clever and excellently appraise the servile role played by the Berne International.

Martov wrote somewhere: "You Bolsheviks hurl abuse at the Berne International but 'your own' friend Loriot is a member of it."

That is the argument of a rogue; for everybody knows that Loriot is openly, honestly and heroically fighting for the Third International. In 1902, when Zubatov organised meetings of workers in Moscow in order to hoodwink them with "police socialism",[126] the worker Babushkin, whom I had known since 1894 when he was in my study circle for workers in St. Petersburg, and who was one of the best and most devoted workers of the *Iskra* trend,[127] one of the best leaders of the revolutionary proletariat, and was shot in 1906 by Rennenkampf in Siberia—Babushkin *used to attend the Zubatov meetings* in order to fight Zubatovism and to withdraw the workers from its clutches. Babushkin had no more connection with Zubatov than Loriot with Berne.

IV

The second conclusion is that the Third, Communist, International has been formed so as to prevent "socialists" from confining themselves to the *verbal* recognition of revolution, examples of which are provided by Ramsay MacDonald in his article. Verbal recognition of revolution, which in fact concealed a thoroughly opportunist, reformist, nationalist, petty-bourgeois policy, was the basic sin of the Second International, and we are waging a life-and-death struggle against this evil.

When it is said that the Second International died after suffering shameful bankruptcy, one must be able to understand what this means. It means that opportunism, reformism, petty-bourgeois socialism went bankrupt and died. For the Second International rendered historic service, it has achievements to its credit that are εἰς ἀεί (everlasting) and which the class-conscious worker will never renounce—the creation of mass working-class organisations—co-operative, trade union and political—the utilisation of the bourgeois parliamentary system, and of all the institutions in general of bourgeois democracy, etc.

In order to really defeat opportunism, which caused the shameful death of the Second International, in order to really assist the revolution, the approach of which *even* Ramsay MacDonald is obliged to admit, it is necessary:

Firstly, to conduct all propaganda and agitation from the viewpoint of revolution as opposed to reforms, systematically explaining to the masses, both theoretically and practically, at every step of parliamentary, trade union, co-operative, etc., activity, that they are diametrically opposed. Under no circumstances to refrain (save in special cases, by way of exception) from utilising the parliamentary system and all the "liberties" of bourgeois democracy; not to reject reforms, but to regard them *only* as a *by-product* of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Not a single party affiliated to the Berne International meets these requirements. Not a single one of them shows that it has any idea of how to conduct its propaganda and agitation *as a whole*, explaining how reform *differs* from revolution; nor do they know how to train both the Party and the masses *unswervingly for revolution*.

Secondly, legal work must be combined with *illegal* work. The Bolsheviks have always taught this, and did so with particular insistence during the war of 1914-18. The heroes of despicable opportunism ridiculed this and smugly extolled the "legality", "democracy", "liberty" of the West-European countries, republics, etc. Now, however, only out-and-out swindlers, who deceive the workers with phrases, can deny that the Bolsheviks proved to be right. In every single country in the world, even the most advanced and "freest" of the bourgeois republics, bourgeois terror reigns, and there is no such thing as freedom to carry on agitation for the socialist revolution, to carry on propaganda and organisational work precisely in this sense. The party which to this day has not admitted this under the rule of the bourgeoisie and does not carry on systematic, all-sided *illegal* work in spite of the laws of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois parliaments is a party of traitors and scoundrels who deceive the people by their verbal recognition of revolution. The place for such parties is in the yellow, Berne International. There is no room for them in the Communist International.

Thirdly, unswerving and ruthless war must be waged for the expulsion from the labour movement of all those opportunist leaders who exposed themselves both before and particularly during the war, both in the political sphere and particularly in the trade unions, and the co-operatives. The theory of "neutrality"[128] is a false and despicable evasion, which helped the bourgeoisie to capture the masses in 1914-18. Parties which stand for revolution in words but in deeds fail to carry on undeviating work to spread the influence of precisely the revolutionary and only of the revolutionary party in every sort of mass organisation of the workers are parties of traitors.

Fourthly, there must be no toleration of the verbal condemnation of imperialism while no real revolutionary struggle is waged for the liberation of the colonies (and dependent nations) from one's *own* imperialist bourgeoisie. That is hypocrisy. That is the policy of the agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement (labour lieutenants of the capitalist class). The British, French, Dutch, Belgian, or other party which is hostile to imperialism in words but in deeds does not wage a revolutionary struggle within "its own" colonies for the *overthrow* of "its own" bourgeoisie, does not systematically assist the *revolutionary* work which has already begun everywhere in the colonies, and does not send arms and literature to the revolutionary parties in the colonies, is a party of scoundrels and traitors.

Fifthly, the extreme hypocrisy of the parties of the Berne International is to be seen in their typical recognition of revolution in words while they flaunt before the workers high-sounding phrases about recognising revolution but as far as deeds are concerned go no farther than adopting a purely reformist attitude to those beginnings, elements, manifestations of the growth of revolution in all mass actions which break bourgeois laws and go beyond the bounds of all legality, as for example, mass strikes, street demonstrations, soldiers' protests, meetings among the troops, leaflet distribution in barracks, camps, etc.

If you ask any hero of the Berne International whether his party does such systematic work, he will answer you either with evasive phrases to conceal that such work is not being done—his party lacks the organisations and the machinery for doing it, is incapable of doing it—or with declamatory speeches against "*putschism*" (pyrotechnics), "anarchism", etc. And it is that which constitutes the betrayal of the working class by the Berne International, its actual desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie.

All the scoundrelly leaders of the Berne International take great pains to affirm their "sympathy" for revolution in general, and for the Russian revolution in particular. But only hypocrites or simpletons can fail to understand that the particularly rapid successes of the revolution in Russia *are due* to the many years' work by the revolutionary party in the ways indicated; for years illegal machinery was systematically built up to direct demonstrations and strikes, to conduct work among the troops; a detailed study was made of methods; illegal literature was issued summing up experience acquired and educating the whole Party in the idea that revolution was necessary; leaders of the masses were trained for such events, etc., etc.

V

The most profound and radical differences, which sum up all that has been said above and explain the inevitability of an irreconcilable theoretical and practical political struggle of the revolutionary proletariat against the Berne International, centre around two issues—transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The best proof that the Berne International is held captive by bourgeois ideology is its failure to understand (or not desiring to understand, or pretending not to understand) the imperialist character of the war of 1914-18 and the inevitability of its transformation into civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in all the advanced countries.

When the Bolsheviks, as far back as November 1914, pointed to this inevitability, the philistines of all countries retorted with stupid sneers, and among these philistines were all the leaders of the Berne International. Now, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war has become a fact in a number of countries, not only in Russia but also in Finland, in Hungary, in Germany, and even in neutral Switzerland, and that civil war is maturing is seen, felt, and sensed in all advanced countries without exception.

To ignore this problem now (as Ramsay MacDonald does) or to try *to evade* the issue of the inevitability of civil war with sentimental conciliatory phrases (as Messrs. Kautsky and Co. do) is tantamount to direct betrayal of the proletariat, equivalent to actual desertion to the bourgeoisie. Because the real political leaders of the bourgeoisie have long understood the inevitability of civil war and are making excellent, thoughtful and systematic preparations for it and are strengthening their positions in anticipation of it.

The bourgeoisie of the whole world are exerting all their strength, enormous energy, intellect and determination, hesitating at no crime, and condemning whole countries to famine and complete extinction, in the preparations they are making to crush the proletariat in the impending civil war. The heroes of the Berne International, on the other hand, like simpletons, or hypocritical parsons, or pedantic professors, chant their old, worn-out, threadbare reformist song! No spectacle could be more revolting or more disgusting!

The Kautskys and MacDonalds continue *to frighten* the capitalists with the menace of revolution, *to scare* the bourgeoisie with the menace of civil war in order to obtain concessions from them and get them to agree to follow the reformist path. This is what all the writings, all the philosophy, all the policy of the entire Berne International amount to. We saw that miserable lackey's trick played in Russia in 1905 by the liberals (Constitutional-Democrats), and in 1917-19 by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The servile souls of the Berne International never think of *inculcating upon* the masses the idea of the inevitability and necessity of *defeating* the bourgeoisie in civil war, of pursuing a policy wholly dedicated to this aim, of elucidating, raising and solving all problems from this, and only from this, point of view. That is why our sole aim should be once and for all to push the incorrigible reformists, i.e., nine-tenths of the leaders of the Berne International, into the cesspool of the hirelings of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie *needs* hirelings who enjoy the trust of a section of the working class, whitewash and prettify the bourgeoisie with talk about the reformist path being possible, throw dust in the eyes of the people by such talk, and *divert* the people from revolution by giving glowing descriptions of the charms and possibilities of the reformist path.

All the writings of the Kautskys, and of our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, boil down to such whitewashing and to the whining of the cowardly philistine who fears revolution.

We cannot repeat here in detail the main economic causes that have made the revolutionary (and only the revolutionary) path inevitable, and have made impossible any solution other than civil war to the problems history has placed on the order of the day. Volumes must and will be written about this. If the Kautskys and other leaders of the Berne International do not understand this, all that can be said is ignorance is closer to the truth than prejudice.

Now, after the war, ignorant but sincere men of labour and supporters of the working people understand the inevitability of revolution, of civil war and of the dictatorship of the proletariat far more easily than do the gentlemen stuffed with most learned reformist prejudices, the Kautskys, MacDonalds, Vanderveldes, Brantings, Turatis, and *tutti quanti.**

As one of the particularly striking confirmations of the phenomenon observable everywhere, on a mass scale, namely, that of the growth of revolutionary consciousness among the masses, we may take the novels of Henri Barbusse, *Le Feu* (Under Fire) and *Clarté* (Light). The former has already been translated into all languages, and in France 230,000 copies have been sold. The transformation of an absolutely ignorant rank-and-filer, utterly crushed by philistine ideas and prejudices, into a revolutionary under the influence of the war is depicted with extraordinary power, talent and truthfulness.

The mass of proletarians and semi-proletarians are on our side and are coming over to us by leaps and bounds. The Berne International is a General Staff without an army, and will collapse like a house of cards if thoroughly exposed to the masses.

The name of Karl Liebknecht was used in the whole of the Entente bourgeois press during the war in order to deceive the masses; the French and British imperialist pirates and plunderers were shown as sympathising with this hero, with this "sole honest German", as they said.

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* All the others.—*Ed.*

Now the heroes of the Berne International belong to the same organisation as the Scheidemanns who engineered the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the Scheidemanns who fulfilled the role of worker-executioners and rendered hangman's service to the bourgeoisie. In words—hypocritical attempts to "condemn" the Scheidemanns (as if "condemning" makes any difference!). In deeds—belonging to the same organisation as the murderers do.

In 1907 the late Harry Quelch was expelled by the German Government from Stuttgart for describing a gathering of European diplomats as a "thieves' supper". The leaders of the Berne International are not only participants in a thieves' supper, but even in a vile assassins' supper.

They will not escape the justice of the revolutionary workers.

VI

Ramsay MacDonald disposes of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a couple of words as if it were a subject for a discussion on freedom and democracy.

But it is not. It is time to act, it is too late for discussions.

The most dangerous thing about the Berne International is its verbal recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. These people are capable of recognising everything, of signing everything, as long as they can keep at the head of the labour movement. Kautsky now says that he is not opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat! The French social-chauvinists and Centrists put their names to resolutions in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat!

But they deserve not the slightest confidence.

It is not verbal recognition that is needed, but a complete rupture *in deeds* with the policy of reformism, with prejudices about bourgeois freedom and bourgeois democracy, the pursuit in deeds of the policy of revolutionary class struggle.

Attempts are being made to recognise the dictatorship of the proletariat in words, in order to smuggle in along with it the "will of the majority", "universal suffrage" (this is exactly what Kautsky does), bourgeois parliamentarism, rejection of the idea that the entire bourgeois machinery of state must be destroyed, smashed, blown up. These new evasions, new loopholes of reformism, are most of all to be feared.

The dictatorship of the proletariat would be impossible if the majority of the population did not consist of proletarians and semi-proletarians. Kautsky and Co. try to falsify this truth by arguing that "the vote of the majority" is required for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be recognised as "valid".

Comical pedants! They fail to understand that voting within the bounds, institutions and customs of bourgeois parliamentarism is a *part* of the bourgeois state machinery that has to be broken and smashed from top to bottom *in order* to give effect to the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to pass from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy.

They fail to understand that when history places the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day it is not voting, but civil war that decides *all* serious political problems.

They fail to understand that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule of *one* class, which takes into its hands the *entire* machinery of the new state, and which *defeats* the bourgeoisie and *neutralises* the whole of the petty bourgeoisie—the peasantry, the lower middle class and the intelligentsia.

The Kautskys and MacDonalds recognise the class struggle in words, but in deeds forget about it at the most decisive moment in the history of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat—at the moment when, having seized state power, and supported by the semi-proletariat, the proletariat with the aid of this power *continues* the class struggle until *classes are abolished.*

Like real philistines, the leaders of the Berne International repeat bourgeois-democratic catchwords about freedom, equality and democracy, but fail to see that they are repeating fragments of ideas concerning the free and equal *commodity owner*, fail to understand that the proletariat needs a state not for the "freedom", but *for the suppression* of its enemy, the exploiter, the capitalist.

The freedom and equality of the *commodity owner* are as dead as capitalism. And the Kautskys and MacDonalds will never be able to revive it.

The proletariat needs the abolition of classes—such is the *real* content of proletarian democracy, of proletarian freedom (freedom *from* the capitalist, from commodity exchange), of proletarian equality (not equality of *classes*—that is the banality which the Kautskys, Vanderveldes and MacDonalds slip into—but the equality of the working people who *overthrow* capital and capitalism).

So long as classes exist the freedom and equality of classes is a bourgeois deception. The proletariat takes power, becomes the *ruling* class, smashes bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, suppresses the bourgeoisie, suppresses *all* the attempts of *all* other classes to return to capitalism, gives *real* freedom and equality to the working people (which is practicable only when the private ownership of the means of production *has been abolished*), and gives them not only the "right to", but the *real* use of, *what has been taken* from the bourgeoisie.

He who fails to understand *this* content of the dictatorship of the proletariat (or what is the same thing, Soviet power, or proletarian democracy) is misusing the term dictatorship of the proletariat.

I cannot here develop these ideas in greater detail; I have done so in *The State and Revolution* and in the pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.* I shall conclude by dedicating these remarks to the delegates to the Lucerne Congress (August 10, 1919) of the Berne International.

July 14, 1919

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LETTER TO SYLVIA PANKHURST[129]

To Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, London

August 28, 1919

Dear Comrade,

I received your letter of July 16, 1919, only yesterday. I am extremely grateful to you for the information about Britain and will try to fulfil your request, i.e., reply to your question.

I have no doubt at all that many workers who are among the best, most honest and sincerely revolutionary members of the proletariat are enemies of parliamentarism and of any participation in Parliament. The older capitalist culture and bourgeois democracy in any country, the more understandable this is, since the bourgeoisie in old parliamentary countries has excellently mastered the art of hypocrisy and of fooling the people in a thousand ways, passing off bourgeois parliamentarism as "democracy in general" or as "pure democracy" and so on, cunningly concealing the million threads which bind Parliament to the stock exchange and the capitalists, utilising a venal mercenary press and exercising the power of money, the power of capital in every way.

There is no doubt that the Communist International and the Communist Parties of the various countries would be making an irreparable mistake if they repulsed those workers who stand for Soviet power, but who are against participation in the parliamentary struggle. If we take the problem in its general form, theoretically, then it is this very programme, i.e., the struggle for Soviet power, for the Soviet republic, which is able to unite, and today must certainly unite, all sincere, honest revolutionaries from among the workers. Very many anarchist workers are now becoming sincere supporters of Soviet power, and that being so, it proves them to be our best comrades and friends, the best of revolutionaries, who have been enemies of Marxism only through misunderstanding, or, more correctly, not through misunderstanding but because the official socialism prevailing in the epoch of the Second International (1889-1914) betrayed Marxism, lapsed into opportunism, perverted Marx's revolutionary teachings in general and his teachings on the lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871 in particular. I have written in detail about this in my book *The State and Revolution* and will therefore not dwell further on the problem.

What if in a certain country those who are Communists by their convictions and their readiness to carry on revolutionary work, sincere partisans of Soviet power (the "Soviet system", as non-Russians sometimes call it), cannot unite owing to disagreement over participation in Parliament?

I should consider such disagreement immaterial at present, since the struggle for Soviet power is the political struggle of the proletariat in its highest, most class-conscious, most revolutionary form. It is better to be with the revolutionary workers when they are mistaken over some partial or secondary question than with the "official" socialists or Social-Democrats, if the latter are not sincere, firm revolutionaries, and are unwilling or unable to conduct revolutionary work among the working masses, but pursue correct tactics in regard to that partial question. And the question of parliamentarism is now a partial, secondary question. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were, in my opinion, correct when they defended participation in the elections to the German bourgeois parliament, to the constituent National Assembly, at the January 1919 Conference of the Spartacists in Berlin, *against* the majority at the Conference.[130] But, of course, they were still more correct when they preferred remaining with the Communist Party, which was making a partial mistake, to siding with the direct traitors to socialism, like Scheidemann and his party, or with those servile souls, doctrinaires, cowards, spineless accomplices of the bourgeoisie, and reformists in practice, such as Kautsky, Haase, Däumig and all this "party" of German "Independents".

I am personally convinced that to renounce participation in the parliamentary elections is a mistake on the part of the revolutionary workers of Britain, but better to make that mistake than to delay the formation of a big workers' Communist Party in Britain out of all the trends and elements, listed by you, which sympathise with Bolshevism and sincerely support the Soviet Republic. If, for example, among the B.S.P. there were sincere Bolsheviks who refused, because of differences over participation in Parliament, to merge at once in a Communist Party with trends 4, 6 and 7, then these Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be making a mistake a thousand times greater than the mistaken refusal to participate in elections to the British bourgeois parliament. In saying this I naturally assume that trends 4, 6 and 7, taken together, are really connected with the *mass* of the workers, and are not *merely* small intellectual groups, as is often the case in Britain. In this respect particular importance probably attaches to the Workers' Committees and Shop Stewards,[131] which, one should imagine, are closely connected with the *masses.*

Unbreakable ties with the mass of the workers, the ability to agitate unceasingly among them, to participate in every strike, to respond to every demand of the masses—this is the chief thing for a Communist Party, especially in such a country as Britain, where until now (as incidentally is the case in all imperialist countries) participation in the socialist movement, and the labour movement generally, has been confined chiefly to a thin top crust of workers, the labour aristocracy, most of whom are thoroughly and hopelessly spoiled by reformism and are held back by bourgeois and imperialist prejudices. Without a struggle against this stratum, without the destruction of every trace of its prestige among the workers, without convincing the masses of the utter bourgeois corruption of this stratum, there can be no question of a serious communist workers' movement. This applies to Britain, France, America and Germany.

Those working-class revolutionaries who make parliamentarism the centre of their attacks are quite right inasmuch as these attacks serve to express their denial in principle of bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. Soviet power, the Soviet republic—this is what the workers' revolution has put in place of bourgeois democracy, this is the form of transition from capitalism to socialism, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And criticism of parliamentarism is not only legitimate and necessary, as giving the case for the transition to Soviet power, but is quite correct, as being the recognition of the historically conditional and limited character of parliamentarism, its connection with capitalism and capitalism alone, of its progressive character as compared with the Middle Ages, and of *its reactionary character as compared with Soviet power.*

But the critics of parliamentarism in Europe and America, when they are anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists, are very often wrong insofar as they reject *all participation* in elections and parliamentary activity. Here they simply show their lack of revolutionary experience. We Russians, who have lived through two great revolutions in the twentieth century, are well aware what importance parliamentarism can have, and actually does have during a revolutionary period in general and *in the very midst of a revolution* in particular. Bourgeois parliaments must be abolished and replaced by Soviet bodies. There is no doubt about that. There is no doubt now, after the experience of Russia, Hungary, Germany and other countries, that this *absolutely must take place* during a proletarian revolution. Therefore, systematically to prepare the working masses for this, to explain to them in advance the importance of Soviet power, to conduct propaganda and agitation for it—all this is the *absolute* duty of the worker who wants to be a revolutionary in deeds. But we Russians fulfilled *that* task, operating in the parliamentary arena, *too.* In the tsarist, fake, landowners' Duma our representatives knew how to carry on revolutionary and republican propaganda. In just the same way *Soviet propaganda* can and must *be carried on* in and from within bourgeois parliaments.

Perhaps that will not be easy to achieve at once in this or that parliamentary country. But that is another question. Steps must be taken to ensure that these correct tactics are mastered by the revolutionary workers in all countries. And if the workers' party is really *revolutionary*, if it is really a *workers'* party (that is, connected with the masses, with the majority of the working people, with the *rank and file* of the proletariat and not merely with its top crust), if it is really a *party*, i.e., a firmly, effectively knit *organisation of the revolutionary vanguard*, which knows how to carry on revolutionary work among the masses by all possible means, then such a party will surely be able to keep *its own* parliamentarians in hand, to make of them real revolutionary propagandists, such as Karl Liebknecht was, and not opportunists, not those who corrupt the proletariat with bourgeois methods, bourgeois customs, bourgeois ideas or bourgeois poverty of ideas.

If that failed to be achieved in Britain at once, if, in addition, no union of the supporters of Soviet power proved possible in Britain because of a difference over parliamentarism and only because of that, then I should consider a good step forward to complete unity the immediate formation of *two* Communist Parties, i.e., two parties which stand for the transition from bourgeois parliamentarism to Soviet power. Let one of these parties recognise participation in the bourgeois parliament, and the other reject it; this disagreement is now so immaterial that the most reasonable thing would be not to split over it. But even the joint existence of two such parties would be immense progress as compared with the present situation, would most likely be a transition to complete unity and the speedy victory of communism.

Soviet power in Russia has not only shown by the experience of almost two years that the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible *even* in a peasant country and is capable, by creating a strong army (the best proof that organisation and order prevail), of holding out in unbelievably, exceptionally difficult conditions.

Soviet power has done more: it has already achieved a moral victory *throughout* the world, for the working masses everywhere, although they get only tiny fragments of the truth about Soviet power, although they hear thousands and millions of false reports about Soviet power, *are already in favour of Soviet power.* It is already understood by the proletariat of the whole world that this power is the power of the working people, that it alone is salvation from capitalism, from the yoke of capital, from wars between the imperialists, that it leads to lasting peace.

That is why defeats of individual Soviet republics by the imperialists are possible, but it is impossible to conquer the world Soviet movement of the proletariat.

With communist greetings,

N. Lenin

P. S.—The following cutting from the Russian press will give you an example of our information about Britain:

"London, 25.8 (via Beloostrov). The London correspondent of the Copenhagen paper *Berlingske Tidende* wires on August 3rd concerning the Bolshevik movement in Britain: 'The strikes which have occurred in the last few days and the recent revelations have shaken the confidence of the British in the immunity of their country to Bolshevism. At present the press is vigorously discussing this question, and the government is making every effort to establish that a "conspiracy" has existed for quite a long time and has had for its aim neither more nor less than the overthrow of the existing system. The British police have arrested a revolutionary bureau which, according to the press, had both money and arms at its disposal. *The Times* publishes the contents of certain documents found on the arrested men. They contain a complete revolutionary programme, according to which the entire bourgeoisie are to be disarmed; arms and ammunition are to be obtained for Soviets of Workers' and Red Army Deputies and a Red Army formed; all government posts are to be filled by workers. Furthermore, it was planned to set up a revolutionary tribunal for political criminals and persons guilty of cruelly treating prisoners. All foodstuffs were to be confiscated. Parliament and other organs of public government were to be dissolved and revolutionary Soviets created in their place. The working day was to be lowered to six hours and the minimum weekly wage raised to £7. All state and other debts were to be annulled. All banks, industrial and commercial enterprises and means of transport were to be declared nationalised.'"

If this is true, then I must offer the British imperialists and capitalists, in the shape of their organ, the richest newspaper in the world, *The Times*, my respectful gratitude and thanks for their excellent propaganda in behalf of Bolshevism. Carry on in the same spirit, gentlemen of *The Times*, you are splendidly leading Britain to the victory of Bolshevism!

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From HOW THE BOURGEOISIE UTILISES RENEGADES

For forty years, from 1852 to 1892, Marx and Engels spoke of part (i.e., the top strata, the leaders, the "aristocracy") of the workers in Britain *becoming increasingly bourgeois*, *owing to* that country's colonial advantages and her monopolies. It is clear as daylight that the twentieth-century imperialist monopolies in a number of other countries were bound to create the same phenomenon as in Britain. In all the advanced countries we see corruption, bribery, desertion to the bourgeoisie by the *leaders of the working class* and its *top strata* in consequence of the doles handed out by the bourgeoisie, who provide these leaders with "soft jobs", give crumbs from their profits to these upper strata, shift the burden of the worst paid and hardest work to backward workers brought into the country, and enhance the privileges of the "labour aristocracy" as compared with the majority of the working class.

The war of 1914-18 has given conclusive proof of treachery to socialism and desertion to the bourgeoisie by the *leaders and top strata* of the proletariat, by all the social-chauvinists, Gomperses, Brantings, Renaudels, MacDonalds, Scheidemanns, etc. And it goes without saying that for a time part of the workers by sheer inertia follow these bourgeois scoundrels.

The Berne International of the Huysmanses, Vanderveldes and Scheidemanns has now taken full shape as the yellow International of these traitors to socialism. If they are not fought, if a split with them is not effected, there can be no question of any *real* socialism, of any *sincere* work for the benefit of the social revolution.

Let the German Independents[132] try to sit between two stools—such is their fate. The Scheidemanns embrace Kautsky as their "own man". Stampfer advertises this. Indeed, Kautsky is a worthy comrade of the Scheidemanns. When Hilferding, another Independent and friend of Kautsky's, proposed at Lucerne that the Scheidemanns be expelled from the International, the real leaders of the yellow International only laughed at him. His proposal was either a piece of extreme foolishness or a piece of extreme hypocrisy; he wanted to parade as a Left among the worker masses and, at the same time, retain his place in the International of bourgeois servitors! Regardless of what motivated this leader (Hilferding), the following is beyond doubt—the spinelessness of the Independents and the perfidy of the Scheidemanns, Brantings and Vanderveldes are bound to result in a stronger movement of the proletarian masses *away from these traitorous leaders.* In some countries imperialism can continue to divide the workers for a fairly long time to come. The example of Britain is proof of that, but the *unification* of the revolutionaries, and the uniting of the masses with the revolutionaries and the expulsion of the yellow elements are, on a world scale, proceeding steadily and surely. The tremendous success of the Communist International is proof of it: in America, a Communist Party has already been formed, in Paris, the Committee for the Re-establishment of International Contacts and the Syndicalist Defence Committee have come out for the Third International, and two Paris papers have sided with the Third International: Raymond Péricat's *L'Internationale* and Georges Anquetil's *Le Titre censuré* (*Bolshevik*?). In Britain, we are on the eve of the organisation of a Communist Party with which the best elements in the British Socialist Party, the Shop Stewards Committees, the revolutionary trade unionists, etc., are in solidarity. The Swedish Lefts, the Norwegian Social-Democrats, the Dutch Communists, the Swiss and Italian Socialist parties stand solid with the German Spartacists and the Russian Bolsheviks.

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From REPORT OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS TO THE SEVENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

DECEMBER 5, 1919

The question that primarily comes to mind is: how was it possible for such a miracle to have occurred, for Soviet power to have held out for two years in a backward, ruined and war-weary country, in the face of the stubborn struggle waged against it first by German imperialism, which at that time was considered omnipotent, and then by Entente imperialism, which a year ago settled accounts with Germany, had no rivals and lorded it over all the countries on earth? From the point of view of a simple calculation of the forces involved, from the point of view of a military assessment of these forces, it really is a miracle, because the Entente was and continues to be immeasurably stronger than we are. Nevertheless, the year under review is noteworthy most of all for our having won a tremendous victory, so great a victory that I think we may say without exaggeration that our *main difficulties are already behind us*. No matter how great the dangers and difficulties in store for us, the main ones are evidently behind us. We must understand the reasons for this, and, what is most important, must correctly determine our future policy, since the future will almost certainly bring many further attempts by the Entente at intervention, and possibly a rebirth of the previous predatory alliance between international and Russian capitalists to restore the power of the landowners and capitalists, to overthrow Soviet rule in Russia, in short, an alliance pursuing the old aim of extinguishing the centre of the world socialist conflagration—the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Examining the history of the Entente intervention and its political lesson for us from this point of view, I would say that it could be divided into three main stages, each of which has successively given us full and lasting victory.

The first stage, naturally the most convenient and easiest for the Entente countries, involved their attempt to settle matters with Soviet Russia by using their own troops. Of course, after the Entente countries had defeated Germany they had armies of millions of men who had not yet openly declared for peace and who did not immediately recover from the fright given them by the bogey of German imperialism, which had been used to scare them in all the Western countries. At that time, of course, from the military point of view, and from the point of view of foreign policy, it would have been easy for the Entente countries to take a tenth part of their armies and dispatch them to Russia. Note that they completely dominated at sea, that they had complete naval supremacy. Troop transportation and supplies were always completely under their control. Had the Entente countries, who hated us as only the bourgeoisie can hate the socialist revolution, then been able to fling even a tenth part of their armies against us with any success, there cannot be the slightest doubt that Soviet Russia would have been doomed and would have met the same fate as Hungary.

Why did the Entente countries fail to achieve this? They landed troops in Murmansk. The drive into Siberia was undertaken with the aid of Entente troops, and Japanese troops continue to hold a distant slice of Eastern Siberia, while there were military units, even if not big ones, from all the Entente states in all parts of Western Siberia. Then French troops were landed in the South of Russia. That was the first stage of international intervention in our affairs, the first attempt, so to speak, to crush the Soviets with troops from the Entente's own countries, i.e., with the aid of workers and peasants of the more advanced countries, who were splendidly equipped; generally speaking the Entente countries lacked nothing in the way of technical and material means for the campaign. There were no obstacles confronting them. How, then, are we to explain the failure of that attempt? It ended in the Entente countries having to withdraw their troops, because they proved incapable of waging a struggle against revolutionary Soviet Russia. That, comrades, has always been our main and principal argument. From the very outset of the revolution we have said that we constitute a party of the international proletariat, and that, however great the difficulties facing the revolution, there would come a time when, at the most decisive moment, the sympathy, the solidarity of the workers oppressed by international imperialism would make itself felt. For this we were accused of being utopians. But experience has shown that while we cannot always and in all cases rely on action by the proletariat, at any rate we may say that during these two years of the world's history we have been proved correct a thousand times. The attempt by the British and French to crush Soviet Russia with their own troops, an attempt that promised them certain and very easy success in a minimum of time, ended in failure: the British troops have left Archangel, and the French troops that had landed in the South have all been sent home. Despite the blockade, despite the ring drawn around us, news does reach us from Western Europe, we do get British and French newspapers, even if only sporadically, from which we learn that letters sent by British soldiers from Archangel Region have somehow reached Britain and been published there. We know that the name of the Frenchwoman, Comrade Jeanne Labourbe, who engaged in communist activity among French workers and soldiers and was shot in Odessa, became known to the entire French proletariat and became a battle-cry, a name around which all French workers united for action against international imperialism despite the apparently insurmountable factional trends of syndicalism. The words of Comrade Radek, who fortunately, as today's reports state, has been liberated by Germany and whom we shall perhaps see soon, that the soil of Russia, aflame with the fire of revolution, would prove inaccessible to the Entente troops—these words, which seemed to be just a writer's flight of fancy, were actually realised. Despite all our backwardness, despite all the burden of our struggle, the troops of Britain and France proved incapable of fighting us on our own soil. The result was a victory for us. The first time that they tried to send massive military forces against us—and without them victory is impossible—the only result was that, thanks to their correct class instinct, the French and British soldiers brought home from Russia the very ulcer of Bolshevism that the German imperialists were fighting when they expelled our envoys from Berlin. They thought they would protect themselves in this way against the ulcer of Bolshevism, which now spreads over the whole of Germany in the shape of a strengthened labour movement. The victory we won in compelling the evacuation of the British and French troops was the greatest of our victories over the Entente countries. We deprived them of their soldiers. Our response to the unlimited military and technical superiority of the Entente countries was to deprive them of it through the solidarity of the working people against the imperialist governments.

This revealed how superficial and uncertain it is to judge these so-called democratic countries by accepted criteria. Their parliaments have stable bourgeois majorities. This they call "democracy". Capital dominates and weighs down everything and they still resort to military censorship. And they call that "democracy". Among the millions of copies of their newspapers and magazines you would be hard put to find any but an insignificant few that contain even a hint of anything favourable about the Bolsheviks. That is why they say: "We are protected against the Bolsheviks, there is order in our countries", and they call it "democracy". How could it happen that a small section of British soldiers and French sailors were able to compel the withdrawal of the Entente troops from Russia? There is something wrong here. It means that even in Britain, France and America the mass of the people are for us; it means that all these external features, as socialists who refuse to betray socialism have always asserted, are a deception; it means that the bourgeois parliamentary system, bourgeois democracy, bourgeois freedom of the press are merely freedom for the capitalists, freedom to bribe public opinion, to exert pressure on it by all the power of money. That is what socialists always said until the imperialist war scattered them to their national camps and turned each national group of socialists into lackeys of their own bourgeoisie. That was said by socialists before the war, that was always said by the internationalists and Bolsheviks during the war—and it all proved to be absolutely correct. All the external features, all the window-dressings, are a fraud; and this is becoming increasingly obvious to the people. They all shout about democracy, but in no parliament in the world did they dare to say that they were declaring war on Soviet Russia.

That is why we read in the numerous French, British and American publications now available the proposal to "place the heads of state in the dock for having violated the Constitution, for waging war on Russia without declaring war". When and where was it sanctioned, what article of the Constitution, what parliament sanctioned it? Where did they gather their parliamentary representatives together, even after taking the precaution to imprison all Bolsheviks and near-Bolsheviks, to use the expression of the French press? Even under those conditions they did not dare to state in their parliaments that they were fighting Russia. That was why the splendidly armed, previously undefeated troops of Britain and France were unable to defeat us and departed from Archangel Region in the North, and from the South.

That was our first and chief victory, because it was not only a military victory, it was not really a military victory at all—it was actually a victory of that international solidarity of the working people for which we began the whole revolution, and which we pointed to and said that, however numerous the trials we would have to undergo, all these sacrifices would be repaid a hundredfold by the development of the world revolution, which is inevitable. It was apparent from the fact that in the sphere where the grossest material factors play the greatest part, namely, in the military sphere, we defeated the Entente countries by depriving them of the workers and peasants in soldiers' uniforms.

The first victory was followed by the second period of Entente intervention in our affairs. Each nation is headed by a group of politicians who possess wonderful experience, and that is why, after losing this stake, they placed another, taking advantage of their dominant position in the world. There is not a single country, not a single bit of the earth's surface, which is not in fact totally dominated by British, French and American finance capital. That was the basis for the new attempt they made, namely, to compel the small countries surrounding Russia, many of which had been liberated and had been able to declare themselves independent only during the war—Poland, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, the Ukraine, etc.—to compel these small states to go to war against Russia on British, French and American money.

You may remember, comrades, that our newspapers reported a speech by Churchill, the well-known British Cabinet Minister, in which he said that 14 states would attack Russia and that September would see the fall of Petrograd, and December that of Moscow. I heard that Churchill then disclaimed this report, but it was taken from the Swedish *Folkets Dagblad—Politiken* of August 25. But even if this source proved unreliable we know full well that Churchill and the British imperialists acted precisely in this way. We are perfectly well aware that everything was done to exert pressure on Finland, Estonia and other small countries, in order to persuade them to wage war on Soviet Russia. I happened to read a leading article in *The Times*, the most influential bourgeois newspaper in Britain, a leader written when Yudenich's troops, obviously supplied, equipped and conveyed on board Entente transports, were a few versts from Petrograd, and Detskoye Selo had been taken. The article was a veritable onslaught, in which the maximum pressure was exerted—military, diplomatic and historical. British capital flung itself on Finland and faced her with an ultimatum: The eyes of the whole world are on Finland, said the British capitalists, the entire fate of Finland depends on whether she understands her role, whether she will help to crush the filthy, dirty, bloody wave of Bolshevism and liberate Russia. And in return for this "great and moral" work, for this "noble, civilised" work, Finland was promised so many million pounds, such-and-such a piece of territory, and such-and-such benefits. And what was the result? There was a time when Yudenich's troops were a few versts away from Petrograd, when Denikin stood to the north of Orel, when the slightest assistance to them would have quickly settled the fate of Petrograd to the advantage of our enemies, in a minimum of time and at negligible cost.

The entire pressure of the Entente countries was brought to bear on Finland, a country that is up to its neck in debt to them. And not only in debt: Finland cannot carry on for one month without the aid of these countries. But how did the "miracle" of our having won the battle against such an enemy happen? And win it we did. Finland did not enter the war, Yudenich was defeated, so was Denikin, and that at a time when joint action by them would most surely, most swiftly have settled the whole struggle to the advantage of international capitalism. We won the battle with international imperialism in this most serious and desperate trial of strength. But how did we do it? How could such a "miracle" have taken place? It took place because the Entente backed the same card as all capitalist states, which operate wholly and solely by deception and pressure; that was why everything they did aroused such resistance that the result was to our advantage. We were very poorly armed, worn out, and we said to the Finnish workers, whom the Finnish bourgeoisie had crushed, "You must not fight against us." The Entente countries appeared strong in their armaments, with all their outward might, with the food they were in a position to supply to these countries, and demanded that they fight against us. We won this battle. We won because the Entente countries had no troops of their own to fling against us, they had to resort to the forces of the small nations, but here, not only the workers and peasants, but even the considerable section of that very bourgeoisie that had crushed the working class did not in the end go against us.

When the Entente imperialists spoke of democracy and independence, these nations had the impudence from the Entente viewpoint, and foolishness from our viewpoint, to take these promises seriously and to understand independence as really implying independence, and not a means of enriching the British and French capitalists. They thought that democracy meant living as free men, and not that all American multimillionaires would be able to plunder their country, or that every tinpot aristocrat of an officer should be able to behave like a swine and turn into a brazen black-marketeer prepared, for the sake of a few hundred per cent profit, to do the filthiest of jobs. That was how we won! The Entente encountered opposition to its pressure on these small countries, on each of these 14 countries. The Finnish bourgeoisie who employed White Terror to crush tens of thousands of Finnish workers know that this will not be forgotten, and that the German bayonets that made it possible no longer exist—these Finnish bourgeois hate the Bolsheviks as intensely as an exploiter would hate the workers who kicked him out. Nevertheless the Finnish bourgeoisie said to themselves, "If we follow the instructions of the Entente, that means we shall undoubtedly lose all hope of independence." And this independence was given to them by the Bolsheviks in November 1917, when Finland had a bourgeois government. The attitude of wide sections of the Finnish bourgeoisie, therefore, proved to be one of vacillation. We won the battle with the Entente countries because they counted on the small nations and at the same time repelled them.

This experience confirms, on an enormous, global scale, what we have always said. There are two forces on earth that can decide the destiny of mankind. One force is international capitalism, and should it be victorious it will display this force in countless atrocities as may be seen from the history of every small nation's development. The other force is the international proletariat that is fighting for the socialist revolution through the dictatorship of the proletariat, which it calls workers' democracy. Neither the vacillating elements here in Russia, nor the bourgeoisie of the small countries believed us; they called us utopians or bandits or even worse, for there is no stupid and monstrous accusation that they will not fling at us. But when they faced up squarely to the issue of either going with the Entente countries and helping them to crush the Bolsheviks, or of helping the Bolsheviks by neutrality, we proved to have won the battle and to have got that neutrality. We had no treaties, whereas Britain, France and America had all sorts of promissory notes, all sorts of treaties; nevertheless the small nations did as we wanted them to; they did so not because the Polish, Finnish, Lithuanian or Latvian bourgeoisie derived satisfaction from conducting their policy in a way that suited the Bolsheviks—that, of course, is nonsense—but because our definition of the historical forces involved was correct, namely, that either brute capital would be victorious, and then, even if it were in the most democratic republic, it would crush all the small nations of the world—or the dictatorship of the proletariat would be victorious, which is the sole hope of all working people and of the small, downtrodden and weak nations. It turned out that we were right not only in theory, but also in practical world politics. When this battle for the troops of Finland and Estonia took place we won it, although they could have crushed us with insignificant forces. We won the battle despite the Entente countries having thrown the enormous weight of their financial pressure, their military might, and their food supplies into the fray in order to compel Finland to take action.

That, comrades, was the second stage of international intervention, our second historic victory. First, we won the workers and peasants away from Britain, France and America. These troops could not fight against us. Secondly, we won away from them these small countries, all of which are against us, and in which not Soviet, but bourgeois rule dominates. They displayed friendly neutrality towards us and acted contrary to the desires of that mighty world force, the Entente, for it was a beast that wanted to crush them.

We witness here on a world scale the same thing that happened to the Siberian peasants, who believed in the Constituent Assembly and helped the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to join forces with Kolchak and to strike at us. When they learned to their own cost that Kolchak represented the dictatorship of the very worst exploiters, a plunderous dictatorship of landowners and capitalists which was worse than that of the tsar, they organised the tremendous number of revolts in Siberia about which comrades have given us reliable information, and which now guarantee the complete return to us of Siberia, this time politically conscious. What happened to the Siberian peasant, with all his backwardness and political ignorance, has now happened on a broader scale, on a world scale, to all the small nations. They hated the Bolsheviks; some of them had suppressed the Bolsheviks with a bloody hand, with furious White Terror, but when they saw their "liberators", the British officers, they understood the meaning of British and American "democracy". When representatives of the British and American bourgeoisie appeared in Finland and Estonia, the acts of suppression they began were more brazen than those of the Russian imperialists had been, because the Russian imperialists had belonged to an older period and did not know how to suppress properly, whereas these people do know, and go about it thoroughly.

That is why this victory at the second stage is a far more lasting one than is apparent at the moment. I am not exaggerating at all, and consider exaggerations to be extremely dangerous. I have not the slightest doubt that further attempts will be made by the Entente to set against us now one, now another of the small states that are our neighbours. Such attempts will occur because the small states are wholly dependent on the Entente, because all this talk about freedom, independence and democracy is sheer hypocrisy, and the Entente may compel them once again to raise their hand against us. But if this attempt was foiled at such a convenient moment when it was so easy to wage a struggle against us, we may, I think, say definitely that in this respect the main difficulty is undoubtedly behind us. We are entitled to say this, and to say it without the slightest exaggeration, fully conscious that the Entente countries possess a tremendous advantage in strength. We have won a lasting victory. Attempts will be made against us, but we shall defeat them with greater ease, because the small states, despite their bourgeois system, have become convinced by experience, not theory—these gentlemen are theory-proof—that the Entente is a more brazen and predatory brute than the one they have in their minds when they think of the Bolsheviks, the bogey used to scare children and cultured philistines all over Europe.

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Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 208-17

From SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF WORKING COSSACKS

MARCH 1, 1920

And so, when the British landed troops in the North and the French in the South, the decisive test and the final denouement began. The question of who was right was now to receive its answer. Were the Bolsheviks right when they said that in order to win the fight they had to rely upon the workers? Or were the Mensheviks right when they said that an attempt to make a revolution in one country would be senseless and foolhardy, because it would be crushed by other countries? You heard this kind of talk not only from Party people but even from people who were just beginning to think about politics. And then came the acid test. For a long time we did not know what the result would be; for a long time we could not judge the result; but now, after the event, we know what it was. Even in the English newspapers, in spite of the frenzied lies about the Bolsheviks told by all the bourgeois papers—even in those papers letters began to appear from British soldiers near Archangel, saying that on Russian soil they had come across leaflets in English explaining to them that they had been deceived, that they were being led against workers and peasants who had set up their own state.[133] These soldiers wrote that they did not want to fight. As for France, we know that there was a mutiny in the navy for which tens, hundreds, and perhaps thousands of Frenchmen are still doing penal servitude. These sailors declared that they would not fight the Soviet Republic.[134] We can now see why neither French troops nor British troops are fighting us at present, why the British soldiers have been removed from Archangel, and why the British Government dare not bring them on to our soil.

One of our political writers, Comrade Radek, wrote that the Russian soil would prove to be such that no soldier from any other country who set foot on it would be able to fight. This seemed to be too boastful a promise, it seemed a delusion. But it proved correct. The soil on which the Soviet revolution had taken place proved to be very dangerous to all countries. It seems that the Russian Bolsheviks were right; they had already managed to bring about unity among the workers during the time of the tsar, and the workers had managed to create small cells, which greeted all who believed them, whether French workers or British soldiers, with propaganda in their own languages. True, we had only tiny sheets, whereas in the British and French press propaganda was carried on by thousands of newspapers and every phrase was publicised in tens of thousands of columns. We issued only two or three quarto sheets a month; at best it worked out at only one copy for every ten thousand French soldiers. I am not certain whether even that many reached their destination. Why, then, did the French and British soldiers believe them? Because we told the truth, and because when they came to Russia they saw that they had been deceived. They had been told that they were to defend their own country; but when they came to Russia they found that they were to defend the rule of the landowners and capitalists, that they were to crush the revolution. The reason we were able to win over these people in two years was that although they had forgotten that they had once executed their own kings, the moment they stepped on to Russian soil, the Russian revolution and the victories of the Russian workers and peasants reminded the soldiers of France and Britain of their own revolutions, and, thanks to the events in Russia, they recalled what had once happened in their own countries.

And this showed that the Bolsheviks were right, that our hopes were better founded than those of the capitalists, although we had neither funds nor arms, while the Entente had both arms and an invincible army. But we won the sympathy of these invincible armies, so much so that they dare not bring either British soldiers or French soldiers against us, knowing from experience that every such attempt turns against them. That is one of the miracles that have occurred in Soviet Russia.

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Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 384-86

ON COMPROMISES[135]

In a talk with me, Comrade Lansbury laid particular stress on the following argument of the British opportunist leaders in the labour movement.

> The Bolsheviks are compromising with the capitalists, agreeing, in the Peace Treaty with Estonia, for instance, to timber concessions; if that is the case, compromises with capitalists concluded by the moderate leaders of the British labour movement are equally legitimate.

Comrade Lansbury considers this argument, very widespread in Britain, of importance to the workers and urgently requiring examination.

I shall try to meet this desire.

I

May an advocate of proletarian revolution conclude compromises with capitalists or with the capitalist class?

This, apparently, is the question underlying the above argument. But to present it in this general way shows either the extreme political inexperience and low level of political consciousness of the questioner, or his chicanery in using a sophism to veil his justification of brigandage, plunder and every other sort of capitalist violence.

Indeed, it would obviously be silly to give a negative reply to this general question. Of course, an advocate of proletarian revolution may conclude compromises or agreements with capitalists. It all depends on *what kind* of agreement is concluded and *under what circumstances.* Here and here alone can and must one look for the difference between an agreement that is legitimate from the angle of the proletarian revolution and one that is treasonable, treacherous (from the same angle).

To make this clear I shall first recall the argument of the founders of Marxism and then add some very simple and obvious examples.

It is not for nothing that Marx and Engels are considered the founders of scientific socialism. They were ruthless enemies of all phrase-mongering. They taught that problems of socialism (including problems of socialist tactics) must be presented scientifically. In the seventies of last century, when Engels analysed the revolutionary manifesto of the French Blanquists, Commune fugitives,[136] he told them in plain terms that their boastful declaration of "no compromise" was an empty phrase. The idea of compromises must not be renounced. The point is through all the compromises which are sometimes necessarily imposed by force of circumstance upon even the most revolutionary party of even the most revolutionary class, to be able to preserve, strengthen, steel and develop the revolutionary tactics and organisation, the revolutionary consciousness, determination and preparedness of the working class and its organised vanguard, the Communist Party.

Anybody acquainted with the fundamentals of Marx's teachings must inevitably draw this conclusion from the totality of those teachings. But since in Britain, due to a number of historical causes, Marxism has ever since Chartism (which in many respects was something preparatory to Marxism, the "last word but one" before Marxism) been pushed into the background by the opportunist, semi-bourgeois leaders of the trade unions and co-operatives, I shall try to explain the truth of the view expounded by means of typical examples drawn from among the universally known facts of ordinary, political, and economic life.

I shall begin with an illustration I gave once before in one of my speeches. Let us suppose the car you are travelling in is attacked by armed bandits. Let us suppose that when a pistol is put to your temple you surrender your car, money and revolver to the bandits, who proceed to use this car, etc., to commit other robberies.

Here is undoubtedly a case of compromising with highwaymen, of agreement with them. The agreement, though unsigned and tacitly concluded, is nevertheless quite a definite and precise one: "I give you, Mr. Robber, my car, weapon and money; you rid me of your pleasant company."

The question arises: do you call the man who concluded *such* an agreement with highwaymen an *accomplice* in banditry, an *accomplice* in a robbers' assault upon third persons despoiled by the bandits with the aid of the car, money and weapon received by them from the person who concluded this agreement?

No, you do not.

The matter is absolutely plain and simple, down to the smallest detail.

And it is likewise clear that under other circumstances the tacit surrender to the highwaymen of the car, money and weapon would be considered by every person of common sense to be complicity in banditry.

The conclusion is clear: it is just as silly to renounce the idea of literally all agreements or compromises with robbers as it is to acquit a person of complicity in banditry on the basis of the abstract proposition that, generally speaking, agreements with robbers are sometimes permissible and necessary.

Let us now take a political illustration.... *

Written March-April 1920
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Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 491-93

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* The manuscript breaks off here.—*Ed.*

From SPEECH
DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS
APRIL 7, 1920

The trade unions arose out of capitalism as a means of developing the new class. Class is a concept which is evolved in struggle and development. There is no wall dividing one class from another. The workers and peasants are not separated by a Chinese Wall. How did man learn to form associations? First through the guild, and then according to different trades. Having become a class, the proletariat grew so strong that it took over the whole state machine, proclaimed war on the whole world and emerged victorious. The guilds and craft unions have now become backward institutions. Time was when the proletarians, under capitalism, amalgamated along the lines of guild and craft. This was progressive at that time because the proletariat could not have amalgamated in any other way. It is absurd to say that the proletariat could have amalgamated to form a class at once. Such amalgamation requires decades. Marx, more than anybody, fought such sectarian and short-sighted views. The class grows under capitalist conditions, and when the suitable moment for revolution arrives, it takes state power into its own hands. And then all the guilds and craft unions become obsolete, they play a backward role, they are retrograde, not because they are run by bad people, but because bad people and enemies of communism find in them fertile soil for their propaganda. We are surrounded by the petty bourgeoisie who are reviving freedom of trade and capitalism. Karl Marx fought vigorously against the old utopian socialism and advocated the scientific view, which shows that the class struggle fosters the growth of the class, and the class must be helped to mature. Marx also fought the working-class leaders who went astray. In the Federal Council, in 1872, a vote of censure was passed on Marx for saying that the British leaders had been bribed by the bourgeoisie. Of course, Marx did not mean this in the sense that certain people were traitors. That is nonsense. He spoke about a bloc of a certain section of the workers with the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie supports this section of the workers directly and indirectly. That is the way in which it bribes them.

As far as getting its representatives elected to parliament is concerned, the British bourgeoisie has worked miracles, and excels all others. Marx and Engels exposed the bourgeoisie over a period of forty years, from 1852 to 1892, and the bourgeoisie acts in the same way in all countries. The fact that throughout the world trade unions have passed from the role of slaves to the role of builders marks a turning-point.

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Collected Works, Vol. 30, pp. 512-13

From "LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM — AN INFANTILE DISORDER[137]

Today, when I hear our tactics in signing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty being attacked by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, for instance, or when I hear Comrade Lansbury say, in a conversation with me, "Our British trade union leaders say that if it was permissible for the Bolsheviks to compromise, it is permissible for them to compromise too", I usually reply by first of all giving a simple and "popular" example:

Imagine that your car is held up by armed bandits. You hand them over your money, passport, revolver and car. In return you are rid of the pleasant company of the bandits. That is unquestionably a compromise. "*Do ut des*" (I "give" you money, fire-arms and a car "so that you give" me the opportunity to get away from you with a whole skin). It would, however, be difficult to find a sane man who would declare such a compromise to be "inadmissible on principle", or who would call the compromiser an accomplice of the bandits (even though the bandits might use the car and the fire-arms for further robberies). Our compromise with the bandits of German imperialism was just that kind of compromise.

But when, in 1914-18 and then in 1918-20, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia, the Scheidemannites (and to a large extent the Kautskyites) in Germany, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler (to say nothing of the Renners and Co.) in Austria, the Renaudels and Longuets and Co. in France, the Fabians, the Independents and the Labourites in Britain entered into *compromises* with the bandits of their own bourgeoisie, and sometimes of the "Allied" bourgeoisie, and *against* the revolutionary proletariat of their own countries, all these gentlemen were actually acting as *accomplices in banditry*.

The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises "on principle", to reject the permissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to consider seriously. A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must be able to distinguish *concrete* cases of compromises that are inexcusable and are an expression of opportunism and *treachery*; he must direct all the force of criticism, the full intensity of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *these concrete* compromises, and not allow the past masters of "practical" socialism and the parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by means of disquisitions on "compromises in general". It is in this way that the "leaders" of the British trade unions, as well as of the Fabian Society and the "Independent" Labour Party, dodge responsibility *for the treachery they have perpetrated*, for having made *a compromise* that is really tantamount to the worst kind of opportunism, treachery and betrayal.

There are different kinds of compromises. One must be able to analyse the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise, or of each variety of compromise. One must learn to distinguish between a man who has given up his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to lessen the evil they can do and to facilitate their capture and execution, and a man who gives his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to share in the loot. In politics this is by no means always as elementary as it is in this childishly simple example. However, anyone who is out to think up for the workers some kind of recipe that will provide them with cut-and-dried solutions for all contingencies, or promises that the policy of the revolutionary proletariat will never come up against difficult or complex situations, is simply a charlatan.

To leave no room for misinterpretation, I shall attempt to outline, if only very briefly, several fundamental rules for the analysis of concrete compromises.

The party which entered into a compromise with the German imperialists by signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had been evolving its internationalism in practice ever since the end of 1914. It was not afraid to call for the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and to condemn "defence of country" in a war between two imperialist robbers. The parliamentary representatives of this party preferred exile in Siberia[138] to taking a road leading to ministerial portfolios in a bourgeois government. The revolution that overthrew tsarism and established a democratic republic put this party to a new and tremendous test—it did not enter into any agreements with its "own" imperialists, but prepared and brought about their overthrow. When it had assumed political power, this party did not leave a vestige of either landed or capitalist ownership. After making public and repudiating the imperialists' secret treaties, this party proposed peace to *all* nations, and yielded to the violence of the Brest-Litovsk robbers only after the Anglo-French imperialists had torpedoed the conclusion of a peace, and after the Bolsheviks had done everything humanly possible to hasten the revolution in Germany and other countries. The absolute correctness of this compromise, entered into by such a party in such a situation, is becoming ever clearer and more obvious with every day.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia (like all the leaders of the Second International throughout the world, in 1914-20) began with treachery—by directly or indirectly justifying "defence of country", i.e., the defence of *their own* predatory bourgeoisie. They continued their treachery by entering into a coalition with the bourgeoisie of *their own* country, and fighting, together with *their own* bourgeoisie, against the revolutionary proletariat of their own country. Their bloc, first with Kerensky and the Cadets, and then with Kolchak and Denikin in Russia—like the bloc of their *confrères* abroad with the bourgeoisie of *their* respective countries—was in fact desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat. From beginning to end, *their* compromise with the bandits of imperialism meant their becoming *accomplices* in imperialist banditry.

The divergence between "leaders" and "masses" was brought out with particular clarity and sharpness in all countries at the end of the imperialist war and following it. The principal reason for this was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892, from the example of Britain. That country's exclusive position led to the emergence, from the "masses", of a semi-petty-bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy". The leaders of this labour aristocracy were constantly going over to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly on its pay roll. Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred of these disreputable persons by openly branding them as traitors. Present-day (twentieth-century) imperialism has given a few advanced countries an exceptionally privileged position, which, everywhere in the Second International, has produced a certain type of traitor, opportunist, and social-chauvinist leaders, who champion the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy. The opportunist parties have become separated from the "masses", i.e., from the broadest strata of the working people, their majority, the lowest-paid workers. The revolutionary proletariat cannot be victorious unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled. That is the policy the Third International has embarked on.

This ridiculous "theory" that Communists should not work in reactionary trade unions reveals with the utmost clarity the frivolous attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the "masses", and their misuse of clamour about the "masses". If you want to help the "masses" and win the sympathy and support of the "masses", you should not fear difficulties, or pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution from the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must absolutely *work wherever the masses are to be found.* You must be capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found. The trade unions and the workers' co-operatives (the latter sometimes, at least) are the very organisations in which the masses are to be found. According to figures quoted in the Swedish paper *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* of March 10, 1920, the trade union membership in Great Britain increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6,600,000 at the end of 1918, an increase of 19 per cent. Towards the close of 1919, the membership was estimated at 7,500,000. I have not got the corresponding figures for France and Germany to hand, but absolutely incontestable and generally known facts testify to a rapid rise in the trade union membership in these countries too.

These facts make crystal clear something that is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms, namely, that class-consciousness and the desire for organisation are growing among the proletarian masses, among the rank and file, among the backward elements. Millions of workers in Great Britain, France and Germany are *for the first time* passing from a complete lack of organisation to the elementary, lowest, simplest, and (to those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most easily comprehensible form of organisation, namely, the trade unions; yet the revolutionary but imprudent Left Communists stand by, crying out "the masses", "the masses!" but *refusing to work within the trade unions*, on the pretext that they are "reactionary", and invent a brand-new, immaculate little "Workers' Union", which is guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices and innocent of craft or narrow-minded craft-union sins, a union which, they claim, will be (!) a broad organisation. "Recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship" will be the *only* (!) condition of membership. (See the passage quoted above.)[139]

It would be hard to imagine any greater ineptitude or greater harm to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries! Why, if we in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of trade union membership, we would be doing a very foolish thing, damaging our influence among the masses, and helping the Mensheviks. The task devolving on Communists is to *convince* the backward elements, to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them with artificial and childishly "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that the Gomperses, the Hendersons, the Jouhaux and the Legiens are very grateful to those "Left" revolutionaries who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "principles"!), or like some of the revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World,[140] advocate quitting the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them.

IX

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

There is no Communist Party in Great Britain as yet, but there is a fresh, broad, powerful and rapidly growing communist movement among the workers, which justifies the best hopes. There are several political parties and organisations (the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, the Workers' Socialist Federation),[141] which desire to form a Communist Party and are already negotiating among themselves to this end. In its issue of February 21, 1920, Vol. VI, No. 48, *The Workers' Dreadnought*, weekly organ of the last of the organisations mentioned, carried an article by the editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, entitled "Towards a Communist Party". The article outlines the progress of the negotiations between the four organisations mentioned, for the formation of a united Communist Party, on the basis of affiliation to the Third International, the recognition of the Soviet system instead of parliamentarism, and the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It appears that one of the greatest obstacles to the immediate formation of a united Communist Party is presented by the disagreement on the questions of participation in Parliament and on whether the new Communist Party should affiliate to the old, trade unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party, which is mostly made up of trade unions. The Workers' Socialist Federation and the Socialist Labour Party* are opposed to taking part in parliamentary elections and in Parliament, and they are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party; in this they disagree with all or with most of the members of the British Socialist Party, which they regard as the "Right wing of the Communist parties" in Great Britain. (Page 5, Sylvia Pankhurst's article.)

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* I believe this party is opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party but not all its members are opposed to participation in Parliament.

Thus, the main division is the same as in Germany, notwithstanding the enormous difference in the forms in which the disagreements manifest themselves (in Germany the form is far closer to the "Russian" than it is in Great Britain), and in a number of other things. Let us examine the arguments of the "Lefts".

On the question of participation in Parliament, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst refers to an article in the same issue, by Comrade Gallacher, who writes in the name of the Scottish Workers' Council in Glasgow.

> "The above council," he writes, "is definitely anti-parliamentarian, and has behind it the Left wing of the various political bodies. We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland, striving continually to build up a revolutionary organisation within the industries [in various branches of production], and a Communist Party, based on social committees, throughout the country. For a considerable time we have been sparring with the official parliamentarians. We have not considered it necessary to declare open warfare on them, and they are *afraid* to open an attack on us.
>
> "But this state of affairs cannot long continue. We are winning all along the line.
>
> "The rank and file of the I.L.P. in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the thought of Parliament, and the Soviets [the Russian word transliterated into English is used] or Workers' Councils are being supported by almost every branch. This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade their members to come back into the parliamentary fold. Revolutionary comrades *must not* [all italics are the author's] give any support to this gang. Our fight here is going to be a difficult one. One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more impelling force than their regard for the revolution. Any support given to parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes. Henderson, Clynes and Co. are hopelessly reactionary. The official I.L.P. is more and more coming under the control of middle-class Liberals, who ... have found their 'spiritual home' in the camp of Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden and Co. The official I.L.P. is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it. Any support to the parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former. The B.S.P. doesn't count at all here.... What is wanted here is a sound revolutionary industrial organisation, and a Communist Party working along clear, well-defined, scientific lines. If our comrades can assist us in building these, we will take their help gladly; if they cannot, for God's sake let them keep out altogether, lest they betray the revolution by lending their support to the reactionaries, who are so eagerly clamouring for parliamentary 'honours' (?) [the query mark is the author's] and who are so anxious to prove that they *can rule* as effectively as the 'boss' class politicians themselves."

In my opinion, this letter to the editor expresses excellently the temper and point of view of the young Communists, or of rank-and-file workers who are only just beginning to accept communism. This temper is highly gratifying and valuable; we must learn to appreciate and support it for, in its absence, it would be hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain, or in any other country for that matter. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, and are able to evoke such a temper (which is very often dormant, unconscious and latent) among the masses, should be appreciated and given every assistance. At the same time, we must tell them openly and frankly that a state of mind is *by itself* insufficient for leadership of the masses in a great revolutionary struggle, and that the cause of the revolution may well be harmed by certain errors that people who are most devoted to the cause of the revolution are about to commit, or are committing. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly reveals the rudiments of *all* the mistakes that are being made by the German "Left" Communists and were made by the Russian "Left" Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

The writer of the letter is full of a noble and working-class hatred for the bourgeois "class politicians" (a hatred understood and shared, however, not only by proletarians but by all working people, by all *Kleinen Leuten*,* to use the German expression). In a representative of the oppressed and exploited masses, this hatred is truly the "beginning of all wisdom", the basis of any socialist and communist movement and of its success. The writer, however, has apparently lost sight of the fact that politics is a science and an art that does not fall from the skies or come gratis, and that, if it wants to overcome the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must train its *own* proletarian "class politicians", of a kind in no way inferior to bourgeois politicians.

The writer of the letter fully realises that only workers' Soviets, not parliament, can be the instrument enabling the proletariat to achieve its aims; those who have failed to understand this are, of course, out-and-out reactionaries, even if they are most highly educated people, most experienced politicians, most sincere socialists, most erudite Marxists, and most honest citizens and fathers of families.

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* Small folk, little people (Germ.).—*Ed.*

But the writer of the letter does not even ask—it does not occur to him to ask—whether it is possible to bring about the Soviets' victory over parliament without getting pro-Soviet politicians *into* parliament, without disintegrating parliamentarism from *within*, without working within parliament for the success of the Soviets in their forthcoming task of dispersing parliament. Yet the writer of the letter expresses the absolutely correct idea that the Communist Party in Great Britain must act on *scientific* principles. Science demands, first, that the experience of other countries be taken into account, especially if these other countries, which are also capitalist, are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a very similar experience; second, it demands that account be taken of *all* the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in a given country, and also that policy should not be determined only by the desires and views, by the degree of class-consciousness and the militancy of one group or party alone.

It is true that the Hendersons, the Clyneses, the MacDonalds and the Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary. It is equally true that they want to assume power (though they would prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to "rule" along the old bourgeois lines, and that when they are in power they will certainly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All that is true. But it does not at all follow that to support them means treachery to the revolution; what does follow is that, in the interests of the revolution, working-class revolutionaries should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support. To explain this idea, I shall take two contemporary British political documents: (1) the speech delivered by Prime Minister Lloyd George on March 18, 1920 (as reported in *The Manchester Guardian* of March 19, 1920), and (2) the arguments of a "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in the article mentioned above.

In his speech Lloyd George entered into a polemic with Asquith (who had been especially invited to this meeting but declined to attend) and with those Liberals who want, not a coalition with the Conservatives, but closer relations with the Labour Party. (In the above-quoted letter, Comrade Gallacher also points to the fact that Liberals are joining the Independent Labour Party.) Lloyd George argued that a coalition—and a *close* coalition at that—between the

Liberals and the Conservatives was essential, otherwise there might be a victory for the Labour Party, which Lloyd George prefers to call "Socialist" and which is working for the "common ownership" of the means of production. "It is ... known as communism in France," the leader of the British bourgeoisie said, putting it popularly for his audience, Liberal M.P.s who probably never knew it before. In Germany it was called socialism, and in Russia it is called Bolshevism, he went on to say. To Liberals this is unacceptable on principle, Lloyd George explained, because they stand in principle for private property. "Civilisation is in jeopardy," the speaker declared, and consequently Liberals and Conservatives must unite....

> "...if you go to the agricultural areas," said Lloyd George, "I agree you have the old party divisions as strong as ever. They are removed from the danger. It does not walk their lanes. But when they see it they will be as strong as some of these industrial constituencies are now. Four-fifths of this country is industrial and commercial; hardly one-fifth is agricultural. It is one of the things I have constantly in my mind when I think of the dangers of the future here. In France the population is agricultural, and you have a solid body of opinion which does not move very rapidly, and which is not very easily excited by revolutionary movements. That is not the case here. This country is more top-heavy than any country in the world, and if it begins to rock, the crash here, for that reason, will be greater than in any land."

From this the reader will see that Mr. Lloyd George is not only a very intelligent man, but one who has also learned a great deal from the Marxists. We too have something to learn from Lloyd George.

Of definite interest is the following episode, which occurred in the course of the discussion after Lloyd George's speech:

> "*Mr. Wallace, M.P.*: I should like to ask what the Prime Minister considers the effect might be in the industrial constituencies upon the industrial workers, so many of whom are Liberals at the present time and from whom we get so much support. Would not a possible result be to cause an immediate overwhelming accession of strength to the Labour Party from men who at present are our cordial supporters?
>
> "*The Prime Minister*: I take a totally different view. The fact that Liberals are fighting among themselves undoubtedly drives a very considerable number of Liberals in despair to the Labour Party, where you get a considerable body of Liberals, very able men, whose business it is to discredit the Government. The result is undoubtedly to bring a good accession of public sentiment to the Labour Party. It does not go to the Liberals who are outside, it goes to the Labour Party, the by-elections show that."

It may be said, in passing, that this argument shows in particular how muddled even the most intelligent members of the bourgeoisie have become and how they cannot help committing irreparable blunders. That, in fact, is what will bring about the downfall of the bourgeoisie. Our people, however, may commit blunders (provided, of course, that they are not too serious and are rectified in time) and yet, in the long run, will prove the victors.

The second political document is the following argument advanced by Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, a "Left" Communist:

> "...Comrade Inkpin [the General Secretary of the British Socialist Party] refers to the Labour Party as 'the main body of the working-class movement'. Another comrade of the British Socialist Party, at the Third International, just held, put the British Socialist Party position more strongly. He said: 'We regard the Labour Party as the organised working class.'
>
> "We do not take this view of the Labour Party. The Labour Party is very large numerically though its membership is to a great extent quiescent and apathetic, consisting of men and women who have joined the trade unions because their workmates are trade unionists, and to share the friendly benefits.
>
> "But we recognise that the great size of the Labour Party is also due to the fact that it is the creation of a school of thought beyond which the majority of the British working class has not yet emerged, though great changes are at work in the mind of the people which will presently alter this state of affairs....
>
> "The British Labour Party, like the social-patriotic organisations of other countries, will, in the natural development of society, inevitably come into power. It is for the Communists to build up the forces that will overthrow the social-patriots, and in this country we must not delay or falter in that work.
>
> "We must not dissipate our energy in adding to the strength of the Labour Party; its rise to power is inevitable. We must concentrate on making a communist movement that will vanquish it. The Labour Party will soon be forming a government; the revolutionary opposition must make ready to attack it...."

Thus the liberal bourgeoisie are abandoning the historical system of "two parties" (of exploiters), which has been hallowed by centuries of experience and has been extremely advantageous to the exploiters, and consider it necessary for these two parties to join forces against the Labour Party. A number of Liberals are deserting to the Labour Party like rats from a sinking ship. The Left Communists believe that the transfer of power to the Labour Party is inevitable and admit that it now has the backing of most workers. From this they draw the strange conclusion which Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst formulates as follows:

> "The Communist Party must not compromise.... The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution."

On the contrary, the fact that most British workers still follow the lead of the British Kerenskys or Scheidemanns and have not yet had experience of a government composed of these people—an experience which was necessary in Russia and Germany so as to secure the mass transition of the workers to communism—undoubtedly indicates that the British Communists *should* participate in parliamentary action, that they should, from *within* parliament, help the masses of the workers see the results of a Henderson and Snowden government in practice, and that they should help the Hendersons and Snowdens defeat the united forces of Lloyd George and Churchill. To act otherwise would mean hampering the cause of the revolution, since revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, a change brought about by the political experience of the masses, never by propaganda alone. "To lead the way without compromises, without turning"—this slogan is obviously wrong if it comes from a patently impotent minority of the workers who know (or at all events should know) that given a Henderson and Snowden victory over Lloyd George and Churchill, the majority will soon become disappointed in their leaders and will begin to support communism (or at all events will adopt an attitude of neutrality, and, in the main, of sympathetic neutrality, towards the Communists). It is as though 10,000 soldiers were to hurl themselves into battle against an enemy force of 50,000, when it would be proper to "halt", "take evasive action", or even effect a "compromise" so as to gain time until the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements that are on their way but cannot go into action immediately. That is intellectualist childishness, not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class.

The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions and especially by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realise the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. It is only when the "*lower classes*" *do not want* to live in the old way and the "upper classes" *cannot carry on in the old way* that the revolution can triumph. This truth can be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that, for a revolution to take place, it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, and politically active workers) should fully realise that revolution is necessary, and that they should be prepared to die for it; second, that the ruling classes should be going through a governmental crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics (symptomatic of any genuine revolution is a rapid, tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the size of the working and oppressed masses—hitherto apathetic—who are capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government, and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to rapidly overthrow it.

Incidentally, as can also be seen from Lloyd George's speech, both conditions for a successful proletarian revolution are clearly maturing in Great Britain. The errors of the Left Communists are particularly dangerous at present, because certain revolutionaries are not displaying a sufficiently thoughtful, sufficiently attentive, sufficiently intelligent and sufficiently shrewd attitude toward each of these conditions. If we are the party of the revolutionary *class*, and not merely a revolutionary group, and if we want the *masses* to follow us (and unless we achieve that, we stand the risk of remaining mere windbags), we must, first, help Henderson or Snowden to beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or, rather, compel the former to beat the latter, because the former *are afraid of their victory*!); second, we must help the majority of the working class to be convinced by their own experience that we are right, i.e., that the Hendersons and Snowdens are absolutely good for nothing, that they are petty-bourgeois and treacherous by nature, and that their bankruptcy is inevitable; third, we must bring nearer the moment when, *on the basis* of the disappointment of most of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible, with serious chances of success, to overthrow the government of the Hendersons at once; because if the most astute and solid Lloyd George, that big, not petty, bourgeois, is displaying consternation and is more and more weakening himself (and the bourgeoisie as a whole) by his "friction" with Churchill today and with Asquith tomorrow, how much greater will be the consternation of a Henderson government!

I will put it more concretely. In my opinion, the British Communists should unite their four parties and groups (all very weak, and some of them very, very weak) into a single Communist Party on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of *obligatory* participation in parliament. The Communist Party should propose the following "compromise" election agreement to the Hendersons and Snowdens: let us jointly fight against the alliance between Lloyd George and the Conservatives; let us share parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of workers' votes polled for the Labour Party and for the Communist Party (not in elections, but in a special ballot), and let us retain *complete freedom* of agitation, propaganda and political activity. Of course, without this latter condition, we cannot agree to a bloc, for that would be treachery; the British Communists must demand and get complete freedom to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (*for fifteen years*—1903-17) the Russian Bolsheviks demanded and got it in respect of the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviks.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens accept a bloc on these terms, we shall be the gainers, because the number of parliamentary seats is of no importance to us; we are not out for seats. We shall yield on this point (whilst the Hendersons and especially their new friends—or new masters—the Liberals who have joined the Independent Labour Party are most eager to get seats). We shall be the gainers, because we shall carry *our* agitation among the *masses* at a time when Lloyd George *himself* has "incensed" them, and we shall not only be helping the Labour Party to establish its government sooner, but shall also be helping the masses sooner to understand the communist propaganda that we shall carry on against the Hendersons, without any reticence or omission.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with us on these terms, we shall gain still more, for we shall at once have shown the *masses* (note that, even in the purely Menshevik and completely opportunist Independent Labour Party, the *rank and file* are in favour of Soviets) that the

Hendersons prefer *their* close relations with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers. We shall immediately gain in the eyes of the *masses*, who, particularly after the brilliant, highly correct and highly useful (to communism) explanations given by Lloyd George, will be sympathetic to the idea of uniting all the workers against the Lloyd George-Conservative alliance. We shall gain immediately, because we shall have demonstrated to the masses that the Hendersons and the Snowdens are afraid to beat Lloyd George, afraid to assume power alone, and are striving to secure the *secret* support of Lloyd George, who is *openly* extending a hand to the Conservatives, against the Labour Party. It should be noted that in Russia, after the revolution of February 27, 1917 (old style), the Bolsheviks' propaganda against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (i.e., the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens) derived benefit precisely from a circumstance of this kind. We said to the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries: assume full power without the bourgeoisie, because you have a majority in the Soviets (at the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had only 13 per cent of the votes). But the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens were afraid to assume power without the bourgeoisie, and when the bourgeoisie held up the elections to the Constituent Assembly, knowing full well that the elections would give a majority to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks* (who formed a close political bloc and in fact represented *only* petty-bourgeois democracy), the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were unable energetically and consistently to oppose these delays.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with the Communists, the latter will immediately gain by winning the sympathy of the masses and discrediting the Hendersons and Snowdens; if, as a result, we do lose a few parliamentary seats, it is a matter of no significance to us. We would put up our candidates in a very few but absolutely safe constituencies, namely, constituencies where our candidatures would not give any seats to the Liberals at the expense of the Labour candidates. We would take part in the election campaign, distribute leaflets agitating for communism, and, in *all* constituencies where we have no candidates, we would urge the electors *to vote for the Labour candidate and against the bourgeois candidate.* Comrades Sylvia Pankhurst and Gallacher are mistaken in thinking that this is a betrayal of communism, or a renunciation of the struggle against the social-traitors. On the contrary, the cause of communist revolution would undoubtedly gain thereby.

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* The results of the November 1917 elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia, based on returns embracing over 36,000,000 voters, were as follows: the Bolsheviks obtained 25 per cent of the votes; the various parties of the landowners and the bourgeoisie obtained 13 per cent, and the petty-bourgeois-democratic parties, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and a number of similar small groups, obtained 62 per cent.

At present, British Communists very often find it hard even to approach the masses, and even to get a hearing from them. If I come out as a Communist and call upon them to vote for Henderson and against Lloyd George, they will certainly give me a hearing. And I shall be able to explain in a popular manner, not only why the Soviets are better than a parliament and why the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (disguised with the signboard of bourgeois "democracy"), but also that, with my vote, I want to support Henderson in the same way as the rope supports a hanged man—that the impending establishment of a government of the Hendersons will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, and will hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens just as was the case with their kindred spirits in Russia and Germany.

If the objection is raised that these tactics are too "subtle" or too complex for the masses to understand, that these tactics will split and scatter our forces, will prevent us from concentrating them on Soviet revolution, etc., I will reply to the "Left" objectors: don't ascribe your doctrinairism to the masses! The masses in Russia are no doubt no better educated than the masses in Britain; if anything, they are less so. Yet the masses understood the Bolsheviks, and the fact that, in September 1917, *on the eve* of the Soviet revolution, the Bolsheviks put up their candidates for a bourgeois parliament (the Constituent Assembly) and *on the day after* the Soviet revolution, in November 1917, took part in the elections to this Constituent Assembly, which they got rid of on January 5, 1918—this did not hamper the Bolsheviks, but, on the contrary, helped them.

I cannot deal here with the second point of disagreement among the British Communists—the question of affiliation or non-affiliation to the Labour Party. I have too little material at my disposal on this question, which is highly complex because of the unique character of the British Labour Party, whose very structure is so unlike that of the political parties usual in the European continent. It is beyond doubt, however, first, that in this question, too, those who try to deduce the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat from principles such as: "The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the communist revolution"—will inevitably fall into error. Such principles are merely a repetition of the mistake made by the French Blanquist Communards, who, in 1874, "repudiated" all compromises and all intermediate stages. Second, it is beyond doubt that, in this question too, as always, the task consists in learning to apply the general and basic principles of communism to the *specific relations* between classes and parties, to the *specific features* in the objective development towards communism, which are different in each country and which we must be able to discover, study, and predict.

This, however, should be discussed, not in connection with British communism alone, but in connection with the general conclusions concerning the development of communism in all capitalist countries. We shall now proceed to deal with this subject.

X

SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 revealed a highly original turn in world history: in one of the most backward capitalist countries, the strike movement attained a scope and power unprecedented anywhere in the world. In the *first month* of 1905 *alone*, the number of strikers was ten times the *annual* average for the previous decade (1895-1904); from January to October 1905, strikes grew all the time and reached enormous proportions. Under the influence of a number of unique historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show the world, not only the growth, by leaps and bounds, of the independent activity of the oppressed masses in time of revolution (this had occurred in all great revolutions), but also that the significance of the proletariat is infinitely greater than its proportion in the total population; it showed a combination of the economic strike and the political strike, with the latter developing into an armed uprising, and the birth of the Soviets, a new form of mass struggle and mass organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism.

The revolutions of February and October 1917 led to the all-round development of the Soviets on a nation-wide scale and to their victory in the proletarian socialist revolution. In less than two years, the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this form of struggle and organisation to the world working-class movement and the historical mission of the Soviets as the grave-digger, heir and successor of bourgeois parliamentarism and of bourgeois democracy in general, all became clear.

But that is not all. The history of the working-class movement now shows that, in all countries, it is about to go through (and is already going through) a struggle waged by communism—emergent, gaining strength and advancing towards victory—against, primarily, Menshevism, i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism (the home brand in each particular country), and then as a complement, so to say, Left-wing communism. The former struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without any exception, as a duel between the Second International (already virtually dead) and the Third International. The latter struggle is to be seen in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, America (at any rate, a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and of the anarcho-syndicalist trends uphold the errors of Left-wing communism alongside of an almost universal and almost unreserved acceptance of the Soviet system), and in France (the attitude of a section of the former syndicalists towards the political party and parliamentarism, also alongside of the acceptance of the Soviet system); in other words, the struggle is undoubtedly being waged, not only on an international, but even on a world-wide scale.

But while the working-class movement is everywhere going through what is actually the same kind of preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, it is achieving that development in its *own way* in each country. The big and advanced capitalist countries are travelling this road *far more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, to which history granted fifteen years to prepare itself for victory, as an organised political trend. In the brief space of a year, the Third International has already scored a decisive victory; it has defeated the yellow, social-chauvinist Second International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International, seemed stable and powerful, and enjoyed every possible support—direct and indirect, material (Cabinet posts, passports, the press) and ideological—from the world bourgeoisie.

It is now essential that Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account both the fundamental objectives of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism, and the *concrete features* which this struggle assumes and must inevitably assume in each country, in conformity with the specific character of its economics, politics, culture, and national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth. Dissatisfaction with the Second International is felt everywhere and is spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability or incapacity to create a really centralised and really leading centre capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. It should be clearly realised that such a leading centre can never be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equated, and identical tactical rules of struggle. As long as national and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries—and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world-wide scale—the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions (which is a pipe dream at present), but an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions. To seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task: victory over opportunism and Left doctrinairism within the working-class movement; the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—such is the basic task in the historical period that all the advanced countries (and not they alone) are going through. The chief thing—though, of course, far from everything—the chief thing has already been achieved: the vanguard of the working class has been won over, has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government and against parliamentarism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat and against bourgeois democracy. All efforts and all attention should now be concentrated on the *next* step, which may seem—and from a certain viewpoint actually is—less fundamental, but, on the other hand, is actually closer to a practical accomplishment of the task. That step is: the search after forms of the *transition* or the *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this, not even the first step towards victory can be made. But that is still quite a long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone. To throw only the vanguard into the decisive battle, before the entire class, the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support for the vanguard, or at least of sympathetic neutrality towards it and of precluded support for the enemy, would be, not merely foolish but criminal. Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for an entire class, the broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, to take up such a stand. For that, the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, which has been confirmed with compelling force and vividness, not only in Russia but in Germany as well. To turn resolutely towards communism, it was necessary, not only for the ignorant and often illiterate masses of Russia, but also for the literate and well-educated masses of Germany, to realise from their own bitter experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, and the utter vileness of the government of the paladins of the Second International; they had to realise that a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia; Kapp and Co. in Germany) is inevitably the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The immediate objective of the class-conscious vanguard of the international working-class movement, i.e., the Communist parties, groups and trends, is to be able to *lead* the broad masses (who are still, for the most part, apathetic, inert, dormant and convention-ridden) to their new position, or, rather, to be able to lead, *not only* their own party but also these masses in their advance and transition to the new position. While the first historical objective (that of winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to the side of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not have been reached without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social-chauvinism, the second and immediate objective, which consists in being able to lead the *masses* to a new position ensuring the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, cannot be reached without the liquidation of Left doctrinairism, and without a full elimination of its errors.

As long as it was (and inasmuch as it still is) a question of winning the proletariat's vanguard over to the side of communism, priority went and still goes to propaganda work; even propaganda circles, with all their parochial limitations, are useful under these conditions, and produce good results. But when it is a question of practical action by the masses, of the disposition, if one may so put it, of vast armies, of the alignment of *all* the class forces in a given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propagandist methods alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" communism, are of no avail. In these circumstances, one must not count in thousands, like the propagandist belonging to a small group that has not yet given leadership to the masses; in these circumstances one must count in millions and tens of millions. In these circumstances, we must ask ourselves, not only whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—positively of all the classes in a given society, without exception—are arrayed in such a way that the decisive battle is at hand—in such a way that: (1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength; (2) all the vacillating and unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats, as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy, and (3) among the proletariat, a mass sentiment favouring the most determined, bold and dedicated revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has emerged and begun to grow vigorously. Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and summarised above, and if we have chosen the right moment, our victory is assured.

The differences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national distinctions, these political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure (i.e., abstract) communism, i.e., communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical political action by the masses. However, from the standpoint of this practical action by the masses, these differences are most important. To take due account of these differences, and to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these "friends", which weaken and enfeeble *all the "friends" taken together*, will have come to a head—that is the concern, the task, of a Communist who wants to be, not merely a class-conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution. It is necessary to link the strictest devotion to the ideas of communism with the ability to effect all the necessary practical compromises, tacks, conciliatory manoeuvres, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to speed up the achievement and then loss of political power by the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to name individual representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy who call themselves socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and complete disintegration among the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Constitutional-Democrats, the monarchists;

the Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie and the Kappists, etc.); to select the proper moment when the discord among these "pillars of sacrosanct private property" is at its height, so that, through a decisive offensive, the proletariat will defeat them all and capture political power.

History as a whole, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more multiform, more lively and ingenious than is imagined by even the best parties, the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes. This can readily be understood, because even the finest of vanguards express the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of thousands, whereas at moments of great upsurge and the exertion of all human capacities, revolutions are made by the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes. Two very important practical conclusions follow from this: first, that in order to accomplish its task the revolutionary class must be able to master *all* forms or aspects of social activity without exception (completing after the capture of political power—sometimes at great risk and with very great danger—what it did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary class must be prepared for the most rapid and brusque replacement of one form by another.

One will readily agree that any army which does not train to use all the weapons, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses, or may possess, is behaving in an unwise or even criminal manner. This applies to politics even more than it does to the art of war. In politics it is even harder to know in advance which methods of struggle will be applicable and to our advantage in certain future conditions. Unless we learn to apply all the methods of struggle, we may suffer grave and sometimes even decisive defeat, if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes bring to the forefront a form of activity in which we are especially weak. If, however, we learn to use all the methods of struggle, victory will be certain, because we represent the interests of the really foremost and really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to make use of weapons that are most dangerous to the enemy, weapons that deal the swiftest mortal blows. Inexperienced revolutionaries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because, in this field, the bourgeoisie has most frequently deceived and duped the workers (particularly in "peaceful" and non-revolutionary times), while illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. That, however, is wrong. The truth is that those parties and leaders are opportunists and traitors to the working class that are unable or unwilling (do not say, "I can't"; say, "I shan't") to use illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as those which prevailed, for example, during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries most brazenly and brutally deceived the workers, and smothered the truth about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are incapable of combining illegal forms of struggle with *every* form of legal struggle are poor revolutionaries indeed. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out and is in spate, when all people are joining the revolution just because they are carried away, because it is the vogue, and sometimes even from careerist motives. After its victory, the proletariat has to make most strenuous efforts, even the most painful, so as to "liberate" itself from such pseudo-revolutionaries. It is far more difficult—and far more precious—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle *do not yet exist*, to be able to champion the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organisation) in non-revolutionary bodies, and quite often in downright reactionary bodies, in a non-revolutionary situation, among the masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action. To be able to seek, find and correctly determine the specific path or the particular turn of events that will *lead* the masses to the real, decisive and final revolutionary struggle—such is the main objective of communism in Western Europe and in America today.

Britain is an example. We cannot tell—no one can tell in advance—how soon a real proletarian revolution will flare up there, and *what immediate cause* will most serve to rouse, kindle, and impel into the struggle the very wide masses, who are still dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on all our preparatory work in such a way as to be "well shod on all four feet" (as the late Plekhanov, when he was a Marxist and revolutionary, was fond of saying). It is possible that the breach will be forced, the ice broken, by a parliamentary crisis, or by a crisis arising from colonial and imperialist contradictions, which are hopelessly entangled and are becoming increasingly painful and acute, or perhaps by some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain (no Communist has any doubt on that score; for all of us this is a foregone conclusion): what we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will bring into motion the now dormant proletarian masses, and lead them right up to revolution. Let us not forget that in the French bourgeois republic, for example, in a situation which, from both the international and the national viewpoints, was a hundred times less revolutionary than it is today, such an "unexpected" and "petty" cause as one of the many thousands of fraudulent machinations of the reactionary military caste (the Dreyfus case) was enough to bring the people to the brink of civil war!

In Great Britain the Communists should constantly, unremittingly and unswervingly utilise parliamentary elections and all the vicissitudes of the Irish, colonial and world-imperialist policy of the British Government, and all other fields, spheres and aspects of public life, and work in all of them in a new way, in a communist way, in the spirit of the Third, not the Second, International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the "Russian" "Bolshevik" methods of participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle; I can, however, assure foreign Communists that they were quite unlike the usual West-European parliamentary campaigns. From this the conclusion is often drawn: "Well, that was in Russia; in our country parliamentarism is different." This is a false conclusion. Communists, adherents of the Third International in all countries, exist for the purpose of *changing*—all along the line, in all spheres of life—the old socialist, trade unionist, syndicalist, and parliamentary type of work into a *new* type of work, the communist. In Russia, too, there was always an abundance of opportunism, purely bourgeois sharp practices and capitalist rigging in the elections. In Western Europe and in America, the Communists must learn to create a new, uncustomary, non-opportunist, and non-careerist parliamentarism; the Communist parties must issue their slogans; true proletarians, with the help of the unorganised and downtrodden poor, should distribute leaflets, canvass workers' houses and cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are many times fewer remote villages in Europe than in Russia, and in Britain the number is very small); they should go into the public houses, penetrate into unions, societies and chance gatherings of the common people, and speak to the people, not in learned (or very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere try to get people to think, and draw the masses into the struggle, to take the bourgeoisie at its word and utilise the machinery it has set up, the elections it has appointed, and the appeals it has made to the people; they should try to explain to the people what Bolshevism is, in a way that was never possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (exclusive, of course, of times of big strikes, when in Russia a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in Western Europe and extremely difficult in America, but it can and must be done, for the objectives of communism cannot be achieved without effort. We must work to accomplish *practical* tasks, ever more varied and ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch, and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie.*

In Great Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the armed forces and among the oppressed and underprivileged nationalities in their "*own*" state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be tackled in a new fashion (one that is not socialist, but communist; not reformist, but revolutionary). That is because, in the era of imperialism in general and especially today after a war that was a sore trial to the peoples and has quickly opened their eyes to the truth (i.e., the fact that tens of millions were killed and maimed for the sole purpose of deciding whether the British or the German robbers should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are heavily charged with inflammable material and are creating numerous causes of conflicts, crises and an intensification of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying about in all countries as a result of the world economic and political crisis—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of raising up the masses; we must, therefore, with our new and communist principles, set to work to stir up all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, shall not be comprehensively prepared, shall not be in possession of all the weapons and shall not prepare ourselves either to gain victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all aspects of social life—and has now disarranged them—in its bourgeois fashion), or to bring about the impending communist reorganisation of every sphere of life, following that victory.

Since the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, expected neither by the bourgeoisie nor the philistines, the entire world has become different, and the bourgeoisie everywhere has become different too. It is terrified of "Bolshevism", exasperated by it almost to the point of frenzy, and for that very reason it is, on the one hand, precipitating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating on the forcible suppression of Bolshevism, thereby weakening its own position in a number of other fields. In their tactics the Communists in all the advanced countries must take both these circumstances into account.

When the Russian Cadets and Kerensky began furiously to hound the Bolsheviks—especially since April 1917, and more particularly in June and July 1917—they overdid things. Millions of copies of bourgeois papers, clamouring in every key against the Bolsheviks, helped the masses to make an appraisal of Bolshevism; apart from the newspapers, all public life was full of discussions about Bolshevism, as a result of the bourgeoisie's "zeal". Today the millionaires of all countries are behaving on an international scale in a way that deserves our heartiest thanks. They are hounding Bolshevism with the same zeal as Kerensky and Co. did; they, too, are overdoing things and *helping* us just as Kerensky did. When the French bourgeoisie makes Bolshevism the central issue in the elections, and accuses the comparatively moderate or vacillating socialists of being Bolsheviks; when the American bourgeoisie, which has completely lost its head, seizes thousands and thousands of people on suspicion of Bolshevism, creates an atmosphere of panic, and broadcasts stories of Bolshevik plots; when, despite all its wisdom and experience, the British bourgeoisie—the most "solid" in the world—makes incredible blunders, founds richly endowed "anti-Bolshevik societies", creates a special literature on Bolshevism, and recruits an extra number of scientists, agitators and clergymen to combat it, we must salute and thank the capitalists. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the essence and significance of Bolshevism, and they cannot do otherwise, for they have *already* failed to ignore Bolshevism and stifle it.

But at the same time, the bourgeoisie sees practically only one aspect of Bolshevism—insurrection, violence, and terror; it therefore strives to prepare itself for resistance and opposition primarily in *this* field. It is possible that, in certain instances, in certain countries, and for certain brief periods, it will succeed in this. We must reckon with such an eventuality, and we have absolutely nothing to fear if it does succeed. Communism is emerging in positively every sphere of public life; its beginnings are to be seen literally on all sides. The "contagion" (to use the favourite metaphor of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois police, the one mostly to their liking) has very thoroughly penetrated the organism and has completely permeated it. If special efforts are made to block one of the channels, the "contagion" will find another one, sometimes very unexpectedly. Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (as in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie is acting as all historically doomed classes have done. Communists should know that, in any case, the future belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober appraisal of the frenzied ravings of the bourgeoisie. The Russian revolution was cruelly defeated in 1905; the Russian Bolsheviks were defeated in July 1917; over 15,000 German Communists were killed as a result of the wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske, who were working hand in glove With the bourgeoisie and the monarchist generals; White terror is raging in Finland and Hungary. But in all cases and in all countries, communism is becoming steeled and is growing; its roots are so deep that persecution does not weaken or debilitate it, but only strengthens it. Only one thing is lacking to enable us to march forward more confidently and firmly to victory, namely, the universal and thorough awareness of all Communists in all countries of the necessity to display the utmost *flexibility* in their tactics. The communist movement, which is developing magnificently, now lacks, especially in the advanced countries, this awareness and the ability to apply it in practice.

That which happened to such leaders of the Second International, such highly erudite Marxists devoted to socialism as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and others, could (and should) provide a useful lesson. They fully appreciated the need for flexible tactics; they themselves learned Marxist dialectic and taught it to others (and much of what they have done in this field will always remain a valuable contribution to socialist literature); however, *in the application* of this dialectic they committed such an error, or proved to be so *un*dialectical in practice, so incapable of taking into account the rapid change of forms and the rapid acquisition of new content by the old forms, that their fate is not much more enviable than that of Hyndman, Guesde and Plekhanov. The principal reason for their bankruptcy was that they were hypnotised by a definite form of growth of the working-class movement and socialism, forgot all about the one-sidedness of that form, were afraid to see the break-up which objective conditions made inevitable, and continued to repeat simple and, at first glance, incontestable axioms that had been learned by rote, like: "three is more than two". But politics is more like algebra than arithmetic, and still more like higher than elementary mathematics. In reality, all the old forms of the socialist movement have acquired a new content, and, consequently, a new symbol, the "minus" sign, has appeared in front of all the figures; our wiseacres, however, have stubbornly continued (and still continue) to persuade themselves and others that "minus three" is more than "minus two".

We must see to it that Communists do not make a similar mistake, only in the opposite sense, or rather, we must see to it that a *similar mistake*, only made in the opposite sense by the "Left" Communists, is corrected as soon as possible and eliminated as rapidly and painlessly as possible. It is not only Right doctrinairism that is erroneous; Left doctrinairism is erroneous too. Of course, the mistake of Left doctrinairism in communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than that of Right doctrinairism (i.e., social-chauvinism and Kautskyism); but, after all, that is only due to the fact that Left communism is a very young trend, is only just coming into being. It is only for this reason that, under certain conditions, the disease can be easily eradicated, and we must set to work with the utmost energy to eradicate it.

The old forms burst asunder, for it turned out that their new content—anti-proletarian and reactionary—had attained an inordinate development. From the standpoint of the development of international communism, our work today has such a durable and powerful content (for Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) that it can *and must* manifest itself in any form, both new and old; it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new, but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of making all and every form—new and old—a weapon for the complete and irrevocable victory of communism.

The Communists must exert every effort to direct the working-class movement and social development in general along the straightest and shortest road to the victory of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world-wide scale. That is an incontestable truth. But it is enough to take one little step farther—a step that might seem to be in the same direction—and truth turns into error. We have only to say, as the German and British Left Communists do, that we recognise only one road, only the direct road, and that we will not permit tacking, conciliatory manoeuvres, or compromising—and it will be a mistake which may cause, and in part has already caused and is causing, very grave prejudice to communism. Right doctrinairism persisted in recognising only the old forms, and became utterly bankrupt, for it did not notice the new content. Left doctrinairism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms, failing to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how, with the maximum rapidity, to supplement one form with another, to substitute one for another, and to adapt our tactics to any such change that does not come from our class or from our efforts.

World revolution has been so powerfully stimulated and accelerated by the horrors, vileness and abominations of the world imperialist war and by the hopelessness of the situation created by it, this revolution is developing in scope and depth with such splendid rapidity, with such a wonderful variety of changing forms, with such an instructive practical refutation of all doctrinairism, that there is every reason to hope for a rapid and complete recovery of the international communist movement from the infantile disorder of "Left-wing" communism.

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LETTER TO THE BRITISH WORKERS[142]

Comrades:

First of all permit me to thank you for sending your delegation here to acquaint themselves with Soviet Russia.[143] When your delegation suggested to me that I should send a letter through them to the British workers and perhaps also proposals to the British Government, I replied that I gratefully accepted the first suggestion but that I must address myself to the government, not through a workers' delegation but directly, on behalf of our government, through Comrade Chicherin. We have on very many occasions addressed ourselves this way to the British Government, making the most formal and solemn proposals to start peace talks. All our representatives—Comrade Litvinov, Comrade Krasin and the rest—are unceasingly continuing to make these proposals. The British Government stubbornly refuses to accept them. It is not surprising, therefore, that I desired to speak to the delegates of the British workers exclusively as delegates of the workers, not as a representative of the government of Soviet Russia, but simply as a Communist.

I was not surprised to find that several members of your delegation hold a standpoint, not of the working class but of the bourgeoisie, of the exploiting class: in all capitalist countries the imperialist war fully revealed an old ulcer, namely, the desertion of the majority of the workers' parliamentary and trade union leaders to the side of the bourgeoisie. On the false pretext of "defence of country" they were actually defending the predatory interests of either of the two groups of robbers of the entire world—the Anglo-American-French group, or the German group; they entered into an alliance with the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; they covered up this treachery with sentimental petty-bourgeois reformist and pacifist phrases about peaceful evolution, constitutional methods, democracy, etc. This is what happened in all countries; it is not surprising that in Britain this state of affairs has also been reflected in the composition of your delegation:

Members of your delegation, Shaw and Guest—obviously surprised and hurt by my statement that Britain, notwithstanding our peace proposals and notwithstanding the declarations of her government, is continuing her intervention, waging war against us and helping Wrangel in the Crimea and whiteguard Poland[144]—asked me whether I had proof of this, and whether I could show how many trainloads of military supplies Britain had provided Poland with, etc. I replied that, to obtain the secret treaties of the British Government, it was necessary to overthrow it in a revolutionary manner and to seize all its foreign policy documents in the same way as we did in 1917. Any educated man, anybody sincerely interested in politics, was aware even prior to our revolution that the tsar had secret treaties with the predatory governments of Britain, France, America, Italy and Japan concerning the division of the spoils, concerning Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, etc. Only liars and hypocrites (excluding, of course, absolutely ignorant, backward and illiterate people) could deny this, or pretend not to know of this. However, without a revolution, we could never have obtained the secret documents of the predatory governments of the capitalist class. Those leaders or representatives of the British proletariat—whether they are members of Parliament, trade union leaders, journalists, or others—who pretend ignorance of the secret treaties between Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan and Poland concerning the plunder of other countries, concerning the division of the spoils, and who do not wage a revolutionary struggle in order to expose these treaties, are merely once again showing that they are faithful servants of the capitalists. We have known this for a long time; we are exposing this in our own country and in all other countries of the world. The visit to Russia of a delegation of the British workers will hasten the exposure of such leaders in Britain too.

I had a conversation with your delegation on Wednesday, May 26. On the following day telegrams arrived stating that Bonar Law had admitted in the British Parliament that military aid had been given to Poland in October, "for defence against Russia" (of course only for defence, and only in October! There are still "influential labour leaders" in Britain who are helping the capitalists to dupe the workers!), but the *New Statesman*, the most moderate of moderate petty-bourgeois newspapers or journals, wrote of tanks being supplied to Poland, which were more powerful than those used against the Germans during the war. After this, can one refrain from ridiculing such "leaders" of the British workers that ask with an air of injured innocence whether there is any "proof" that Britain is fighting against Russia and is helping Poland and the whiteguards in the Crimea?

Members of the delegation asked me which I considered more important: the formation in Britain of a consistently revolutionary Communist Party, or obtaining the immediate aid of the masses of the workers in Britain for the cause of peace with Russia. I replied that this is a matter of one's convictions. Sincere supporters of the emancipation of the workers from the yoke of capital cannot possibly be opposed to the formation of a Communist Party, which alone is capable of training the workers in a non-bourgeois and non-petty-bourgeois manner, and is alone capable of genuinely exposing, ridiculing and disgracing "leaders" who can doubt whether Britain is helping Poland, etc. There is no need to fear the Communists will be too numerous in Britain, because there is not even a small Communist Party there. But if anyone continues to remain in intellectual slavery to the bourgeoisie, and continues to share petty-bourgeois prejudices about "democracy" (*bourgeois* democracy), pacifism, etc., then of course such people would only do more harm to the proletariat if they took it into their heads to call themselves Communists, and affiliate to the Third International. All that these people are capable of doing is to pass sentimental "resolutions" against intervention couched exclusively in philistine phrases. In a certain sense these resolutions are also useful, namely, in the sense that the old "leaders" (adherents of bourgeois democracy, of peaceful methods, etc., etc.) will make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, and the more they pass empty, non-committal resolutions unaccompanied by revolutionary action, the sooner will they expose themselves. Let each man stick to his job: let the Communists work directly through their Party, awakening the revolutionary consciousness of the workers. Let those who supported the "defence of country" during the imperialist war for the partitioning of the world, "defence" of the secret treaty between the British capitalists and the tsar to plunder Turkey, let those who "do not see" that Britain is helping Poland and the whiteguards in Russia—let such people hasten to increase the number of their "peace resolutions" to the point of becoming ridiculous; the more they do that, the sooner will they meet with the fate of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia.

Several members of your delegation questioned me with surprise about the Red terror, about the absence of freedom of the press in Russia, of freedom of assembly, about our persecution of Mensheviks and pro-Menshevik workers, etc. My reply was that the real cause of the terror is the British imperialists and their "allies", who practised and are still practising a White terror in Finland and in Hungary, in India and in Ireland, who have been supporting Yudenich, Kolchak, Denikin, Pilsudski and Wrangel. Our Red terror is a defence of the working class against the exploiters, the crushing of resistance from the exploiters with whom the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and an insignificant number of pro-Menshevik workers have sided. Freedom of the press and assembly under bourgeois democracy is freedom for the wealthy to conspire against the working people, freedom for the capitalists to bribe and buy up the press. I have explained this in newspaper articles so often that I have derived no pleasure in repeating myself.

Two days after my talk with your delegation, the newspapers reported that, besides the arrests of Monatte and Loriot in France, Sylvia Pankhurst had been arrested in Britain. This is the best possible reply the British Government could give to a question that the non-Communist British labour "leaders", who are captives to bourgeois prejudices, are afraid even to ask, namely, which class the terror is directed against—the oppressed and exploited, or the oppressors and exploiters? Is it a question of the "freedom" of the capitalists to rob, deceive and dupe the working people, or of the "freedom" of the toilers from the yoke of the capitalists, the speculators and the property-owners? Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst represents the interests of hundreds upon hundreds of millions of people that are oppressed by the British and other capitalists. That is why she is subjected to a White terror, has been deprived of liberty, etc. The labour "leaders" who pursue a non-Communist policy are 99 per cent representatives of the bourgeoisie, of its deceit, its prejudices.

In conclusion, I want to thank you once again, comrades, for having sent your delegation here. Despite the hostility of many of the delegates towards the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and although many of them are in the grip of bourgeois prejudices, their acquaintance with Soviet Russia will inevitably accelerate the collapse of capitalism throughout the world.

N. Lenin

30.5.1920

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Izvestia VTsIK No. 130,
June 17, 1920

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pp. 139-43

From THESES ON THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

III

RECTIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL LINE—PARTLY ALSO OF THE COMPOSITION—OF PARTIES AFFILIATED OR DESIRING TO AFFILIATE TO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

14. The measure in which the proletariat in countries most important from the viewpoint of world economics and politics is prepared to establish its dictatorship can be seen with the greatest objectivity and precision in the fact that the most influential parties of the Second International, viz., the French Socialist Party, the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain and the Socialist Party of America, have withdrawn from this yellow International, and have decided—the first three conditionally, the latter even unconditionally—to affiliate to the Third International. This proves that not only the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat but its majority too have begun to come over to our side, convinced by the entire course of events. The main thing now is the ability to consummate this process and to consolidate firmly in point of organisation what has been achieved, so as to advance all along the line, without the slightest wavering.

15. All the activities of the parties mentioned (to which should be added the Socialist Party of Switzerland, if the telegraph reports of its decision to join the Third International are true) show—as any periodical of these parties will strikingly confirm—that they are not yet communist, and quite often run directly counter to the fundamental principles of the Third International, viz., the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government in place of bourgeois democracy.

Accordingly, the Second Congress of the Communist International must resolve that it cannot immediately accept the affiliation of these parties; that it endorses the reply given by the Executive Committee of the Third International to the German "Independents"; that it confirms its readiness to conduct negotiations with any party that withdraws from the Second International and desires to enter into closer relations with the Third International; that it will admit the delegates of such parties in a deliberative capacity to all its congresses and conferences; that it sets the following conditions for the complete adhesion of these (and similar) parties with the Communist International:

1) All decisions of all Congresses of the Communist International and of its Executive Committee to be published in all the periodicals of the parties concerned;

2) These decisions to be discussed at special meetings of all sections or local organisations of the parties;

3) After such discussion, special congresses of the parties to be convened to sum up the results, and for the purpose of—

4) Purging the parties of elements that continue to act in the spirit of the Second International;

5) All periodical publications of the parties to be placed under exclusively Communist editorship.

The Second Congress of the Third International should instruct its Executive Committee formally to accept these and similar parties into the Third International after ascertaining that all these conditions have actually been met and that the activities of the parties have assumed a communist character.

16. As to the question of the conduct of Communists now holding a minority of the responsible posts in these and similar parties, the Second Congress of the Communist International should resolve that, in view of the obvious growth of sincere sympathy for communism among workingmen belonging to these parties, it would be undesirable for Communists to resign from the latter, as long as they can carry on work within them for the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government, and as long as it is possible to criticise the opportunists and Centrists who still remain in these parties.

At the same time, the Second Congress of the Third International should declare in favour of Communist groups and organisations, or groups and organisations sympathising with communism, joining the Labour Party in Great Britain, despite its membership in the Second International. As long as this party ensures its affiliated organisations their present freedom of criticism and freedom to carry on work of propaganda, agitation and organisation in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government, and as long as this party preserves the character of a federation of all trade union organisations of the working class, it is imperative for Communists to do everything and to make certain compromises in order to be able to exercise their influence on the broadest masses of the workers, to expose their opportunist leaders from a higher tribune, that is in fuller view of the masses, and to hasten the transfer of political power from the direct representatives of the bourgeoisie to the "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", so that the masses may be more quickly weaned away from their last illusions on this score.

17. Concerning the Socialist Party of Italy, the Second Congress of the Third International considers that the criticism of that party and the practical proposals submitted to the National Council of the Socialist Party of Italy in the name of the party's Turin section, as set forth in *L'Ordine Nuovo* of May 8, 1920, are in the main correct and are fully in keeping with the fundamental principles of the Third International.

Accordingly, the Second Congress of the Third International requests the Socialist Party of Italy to convene a special congress to discuss these proposals and also all the decisions of the two Congresses of the Communist International for the purpose of rectifying the party's line and of purging it, particularly its parliamentary group, of non-Communist elements.

18. The Second Congress of the Third International considers erroneous the views on the Party's relation to the class and to the masses, and the view that it is not obligatory for Communist parties to participate in bourgeois parliaments and in reactionary trade unions. These views have been refuted in detail in special decisions of the present Congress, and advocated most fully by the Communist Workers' Party of Germany, and partly by the Communist Party of Switzerland, by *Kommunismus*, organ of the East-European Secretariat of the Communist International in Vienna, by the now dissolved secretariat in Amsterdam, by several

Dutch comrades, by several Communist organisations in Great Britain, as, for example, the Workers' Socialist Federation, etc., and also by the Industrial Workers of the World in the U.S.A. and the Shop Stewards' Committees in Great Britain, etc.

Nevertheless, the Second Congress of the Third International considers it possible and desirable that those of the above-mentioned organisations which have not yet officially affiliated to the Communist International should do so immediately; for in the present instance, particularly as regards the Industrial Workers of the World in the U.S.A. and Australia, as well as the Shop Stewards' Committees in Great Britain, we are dealing with a profoundly proletarian and mass movement, which in all essentials actually stands by the basic principles of the Communist International. The erroneous views held by these organisations regarding participation in bourgeois parliaments can be explained, not so much by the influence of elements coming from the bourgeoisie, who bring their essentially petty-bourgeois views into the movement—views such as anarchists often hold—as by the political inexperience of proletarians who are quite revolutionary and connected with the masses.

For this reason, the Second Congress of the Third International requests all Communist organisations and groups in the Anglo-Saxon countries, even if the Industrial Workers of the World and the Shop Stewards' Committees do not immediately affiliate to the Third International, to pursue a very friendly policy towards these organisations, to establish closer contacts with them and the masses that sympathise with them, and to explain to them in a friendly spirit—on the basis of the experience of all revolutions, and particularly of the three Russian revolutions of the twentieth century—the erroneousness of their views as set forth above, and not to desist from further efforts to amalgamate with these organisations to form a single Communist party.

19. In this connection, the Congress draws the attention of all comrades, particularly in the Latin and Anglo-Saxon countries, to the fact that, since the war, a profound ideological division has been taking place among anarchists all over the world regarding the attitude to be adopted towards the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government.

Moreover, a proper understanding of these principles is particularly to be seen among proletarian elements that have often been impelled towards anarchism by a perfectly legitimate hatred of the opportunism and reformism of the parties of the Second International. That understanding is growing the more widespread among them, the more familiar they become with the experience of Russia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, and Germany.

The Congress therefore considers it the duty of all Communists to do everything to help all proletarian mass elements to abandon anarchism and come over to the side of the Third International. The Congress points out that the measure in which genuinely Communist parties succeed in winning mass proletarian elements rather than intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements away from anarchism, is a criterion of the success of those parties.

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REPLY TO A LETTER FROM THE JOINT PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN[145]

I have received a letter from the Joint Provisional Committee for the Communist Party of Britain, dated June 20, and, in accordance with their request, I hasten to reply that I am in complete sympathy with their plans for the immediate organisation of a single Communist Party of Britain. I consider erroneous the tactics pursued by Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and the Workers' Socialist Federation, who refuse to collaborate in the amalgamation of the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party and others to form a single Communist party. Personally I am in favour of participation in Parliament and of affiliation to the Labour Party, given wholly free and independent communist activities. I shall defend these tactics at the Second Congress of the Third International on July 15, 1920 in Moscow. I consider it most desirable that a single Communist party be speedily organised on the basis of the decisions of the Third International, and that such a party should establish the closest contact with the Industrial Workers of the World and the Shop Stewards' Committees, in order to bring about a complete merger with them in the near future.

N. Lenin

8.7.1920

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Collected Works, Vol. 31, p. 202

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

JULY 19, 1920

(*An ovation breaks out. All present rise to their feet and applaud. The speaker tries to begin, but the applause and cries in all languages continue. The ovation does not abate.*) Comrades, the theses on the questions of the fundamental tasks of the Communist International have been published in all languages and contain nothing that is materially new (particularly to the Russian comrades). That is because, in a considerable measure, they extend several of the main features of our revolutionary experience and the lessons of our revolutionary movement to a number of Western countries, to Western Europe. My report will therefore deal at greater length, if in brief outline, with the first part of my subject, namely, the international situation.

Imperialism's economic relations constitute the core of the entire international situation as it now exists. Throughout the twentieth century, this new, highest and final stage of capitalism has fully taken shape. Of course, you all know that the enormous dimensions that capital has reached are the most characteristic and essential feature of imperialism. The place of free competition has been taken by huge monopolies. An insignificant number of capitalists have, in some cases, been able to concentrate in their hands entire branches of industry; these have passed into the hands of combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts, not infrequently of an international nature. Thus, entire branches of industry, not only in single countries, but all over the world, have been taken over by monopolists in the field of finance, property rights, and partly of production.

This has formed the basis for the unprecedented domination exercised by an insignificant number of very big banks, financial tycoons, financial magnates who have, in fact, transformed even the freest republics into financial monarchies. Before the war this was publicly recognised by such far from revolutionary writers as, for example, Lysis in France.

This domination by a handful of capitalists achieved full development when the whole world had been partitioned, not only in the sense that the various sources of raw materials and means of production had been seized by the biggest capitalists, but also in the sense that the preliminary partition of the colonies had been completed. Some forty years ago, the population of the colonies stood at somewhat over 250,000,000, who were subordinated to six capitalist powers. Before the war of 1914, the population of the colonies was estimated at about 600,000,000, and if we add countries like Persia, Turkey, and China, which were already semi-colonies, we shall get, in round figures, a population of a thousand million people oppressed through colonial dependence by the richest, most civilised and freest countries. And you know that, apart from direct political and juridical dependence, colonial dependence presumes a number of relations of financial and economic dependence, a number of wars, which were not regarded as wars because very often they amounted to sheer massacres, when European and American imperialist troops, armed with the most up-to-date weapons of destruction, slaughtered the unarmed and defenceless inhabitants of colonial countries.

The first imperialist war of 1914-18 was the inevitable outcome of this partition of the whole world, of this domination by the capitalist monopolies, of this great power wielded by an insignificant number of very big banks—two, three, four or five in each country. This war was waged for the repartitioning of the whole world. It was waged in order to decide which of the small groups of the biggest states—the British or the German—was to obtain the opportunity and the right to rob, strangle and exploit the whole world. You know that the war settled this question in favour of the British group. And, as a result of this war, all capitalist contradictions have become immeasurably more acute. At a single stroke the war relegated about 250,000,000 of the world's inhabitants to what is equivalent to colonial status, viz., Russia, whose population can be taken at about 130,000,000, and Austria-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria, with a total population of not less than 120,000,000. That means 250,000,000 people living in countries, of which some, like Germany, are among the most advanced, most enlightened, most cultured, and on a level with modern technical progress. By means of the Treaty of Versailles, the war imposed such terms upon these countries that advanced peoples have been reduced to a state of colonial dependence, poverty, starvation, ruin, and loss of rights: this treaty binds them for many generations, placing them in conditions that no civilised nation has ever lived in. The following is the post-war picture of the world: at least *1,250 million* people are at once brought under the colonial yoke, exploited by a brutal capitalism, which once boasted of its love for peace, and had some right to do so some fifty years ago, when the world was not yet partitioned, the monopolies did not as yet rule, and capitalism could still develop in a relatively peaceful way, without tremendous military conflicts.

Today, after this "peaceful" period, we see a monstrous intensification of oppression, the reversion to a colonial and military oppression that is far worse than before. The Treaty of Versailles has placed Germany and the other defeated countries in a position that makes their economic existence physically impossible, deprives them of all rights, and humiliates them.

How many nations are the beneficiaries? To answer this question we must recall that the population of the United States—the only full beneficiary from the war, a country which, from a heavy debtor, has become a general creditor—is no more than 100,000,000. The population of Japan—which gained a great deal by keeping out of the European-American conflict and by seizing the enormous Asian continent—is 50,000,000. The population of Britain, which next to the above-mentioned countries gained most, is about 50,000,000. If we add the neutral countries with their very small populations, countries which were enriched by the war, we shall get, in round figures, some 250,000,000 people.

Thus you get the broad outlines of the picture of the world as it appeared after the imperialist war. In the oppressed colonies—countries which are being dismembered, such as Persia, Turkey and China, and in countries that were defeated and have been relegated to the position of colonies—there are 1,250 million inhabitants. Not more than 250,000,000 inhabit countries that have retained their old positions, but have become economically dependent upon America, and all of which, during the war, were militarily dependent, once the war involved the whole world and did not permit a single state to remain really neutral. And, finally, we have not more than 250,000,000 inhabitants in countries whose top stratum, the capitalists alone, benefited from the partition of the world. We thus get a total of about 1,750 million comprising the entire population of the world. I would like to remind you of this picture of the world, for all the basic contradictions of capitalism, of imperialism, which are leading up to revolution, all the basic contradictions in the working-class movement that have led up to the furious struggle against the Second International, facts our chairman has referred to, are all connected with this partitioning of the world's population.

Of course, these figures give the economic picture of the world only approximately, in broad outline. And, comrades, it is natural that, with the population of the world divided in this way, exploitation by finance capital, the capitalist monopolies, has increased many times over.

Not only have the colonial and the defeated countries been reduced to a state of dependence; within each victor state the contradictions have grown more acute; all the capitalist contradictions have become aggravated. I shall illustrate this briefly with a few examples.

Let us take the national debts. We know that the debts of the principal European states increased no less than *sevenfold* in the period between 1914 and 1920. I shall quote another economic source, one of particular significance—Keynes, the British diplomat and author of *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, who, on instructions from his government, took part in the Versailles peace negotiations, observed them on the spot from the purely bourgeois point of view, studied the subject in detail, step by step, and took part in the conferences as an economist. He has arrived at conclusions which are more weighty, more striking and more instructive than any a Communist revolutionary could draw, because they are the conclusions of a well-known bourgeois and implacable enemy of Bolshevism, which he, like the British philistine he is, imagines as something monstrous, ferocious, and bestial. Keynes has reached the conclusion that after the Peace of Versailles, Europe and the whole world are heading for bankruptcy. He has resigned, and thrown his book in the government's face with the words: "What you are doing is madness." I shall quote his figures, which can be summed up as follows.

What are the debtor-creditor relations that have developed between the principal powers? I shall convert pounds sterling into gold rubles, at a rate of ten gold rubles to one pound. Here is what we get: the United States has assets amounting to 19,000 million, its liabilities are nil. Before the war it was in Britain's debt. In his report on April 14, 1920, to the last congress of the Communist Party of Germany, Comrade Levi very correctly pointed out that there are now only two powers in the world that can act independently, viz., Britain and America. America alone is absolutely independent financially. Before the war she was a debtor; she is now a creditor only. All the other powers in the world are debtors. Britain has been reduced to a position in which her assets total 17,000 million, and her liabilities 8,000 million. She is already half-way to becoming a debtor nation. Moreover, her assets include about 6,000 million owed to her by Russia. Included in the debt are military supplies received by Russia during the war. When Krasin, as representative of the Russian Soviet Government, recently had occasion to discuss with Lloyd George the subject of debt agreements, he made it plain to the scientists and politicians, to the British Government's leaders, that they were labouring under a strange delusion if they were counting on getting these debts repaid. The British diplomat Keynes has already laid this delusion bare.

Of course, it is not only or even not at all a question of the Russian revolutionary government having no wish to pay the debts. No government would pay, because these debts are usurious interest on a sum that has been paid twenty times over, and the selfsame bourgeois Keynes, who does not in the least sympathise with the Russian revolutionary movement, says: "It is clear that these debts cannot be taken into account."

In regard to France, Keynes quotes the following figures: her assets amount to 3,500 million, and her liabilities to

10,500 million! And this is a country which the French themselves called the world's money-lender, because her "savings" were enormous; the proceeds of colonial and financial pillage—a gigantic capital—enabled her to grant thousands upon thousands of millions in loans, particularly to Russia. These loans brought in an enormous revenue. Notwithstanding this and notwithstanding victory, France has been reduced to debtor status.

A bourgeois American source, quoted by Comrade Braun, a Communist, in his book *Who Must Pay the War Debts*? (Leipzig, 1920), estimates the ratio of debts to national wealth as follows: in the victor countries, Britain and France, the ratio of debts to aggregate national wealth is over 50 per cent; in Italy the percentage is between 60 and 70, and in Russia 90. As you know, however, these debts do not disturb us, because we followed Keynes's excellent advice just a little before his book appeared—we annulled all our debts. (*Stormy applause.*)

In this, however, Keynes reveals the usual crankiness of the philistine: while advising that all debts should be annulled, he goes on to say that, of course, France only stands to gain by it, that, of course, Britain will not lose very much, as nothing can be got out of Russia in any case; America will lose a fair amount, but Keynes counts on American "generosity"! On this point our views differ from those of Keynes and other petty-bourgeois pacifists. We think that to get the debts annulled they will have to wait for something else to happen, and will have to try working in a direction other than counting on the "generosity" of the capitalists.

These few figures go to show that the imperialist war has created an impossible situation for the victor powers as well. This is further shown by the enormous disparity between wages and price rises. On March 8 of this year, the Supreme Economic Council, an institution charged with protecting the bourgeois system throughout the world from the mounting revolution, adopted a resolution which ended with an appeal for order, industry and thrift, provided, of course, the workers remain the slaves of capital. This Supreme Economic Council, organ of the Entente and of the capitalists of the whole world, presented the following summary.

In the United States of America food prices have risen, on the average, by 120 per cent, whereas wages have increased only by 100 per cent. In Britain, food prices have gone up by 170 per cent, and wages 130 per cent; in France, food prices—300 per cent, and wages 200 per cent; in Japan—food prices 130 per cent, and wages 60 per cent (I have analysed Comrade Braun's figures in his pamphlet and those of the Supreme Economic Council as published in *The Times* of March 10, 1920).

In such circumstances, the workers' mounting resentment, the growth of a revolutionary temper and ideas, and the increase in spontaneous mass strikes are obviously inevitable, since the position of the workers is becoming intolerable. The workers' own experience is convincing them that the capitalists have become prodigiously enriched by the war and are placing the burden of war costs and debts upon the workers' shoulders. We recently learnt by cable that America wants to deport another 500 Communists to Russia so as to get rid of "dangerous agitators".

Even if America deports to our country, not 500 but 500,000 Russian, American, Japanese and French "agitators" that will make no difference, because there will still be the disparity between prices and wages, which they can do nothing about. The reason why they can do nothing about it is because private property is most strictly safeguarded, is "sacred" there. That should not be forgotten, because it is only in Russia that the exploiters' private property has been abolished. The capitalists can do nothing about the gap between prices and wages, and the workers cannot live on their previous wages. The old methods are useless against this calamity. Nothing can be achieved by isolated strikes, the parliamentary struggle, or the vote, because "private property is sacred", and the capitalists have accumulated such debts that the whole world is in bondage to a handful of men. Meanwhile the workers' living conditions are becoming more and more unbearable. There is no other way out but to abolish the exploiters' "private property".

In his pamphlet *Britain and the World Revolution*, valuable extracts from which were published by our *Bulletin of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs* of February 1920, Comrade Lapinsky points out that in Britain coal export prices have doubled as against those anticipated by official industrial circles.

In Lancashire things have gone so far that shares are at a premium of 400 per cent. Bank profits are at least 40-50 per cent. It should, moreover, be noted that, in determining bank profits, all bank officials are able to conceal the lion's share of profits by calling them, not profits but bonuses, commissions, etc. So here, too, indisputable economic facts prove that the wealth of a tiny handful of people has grown prodigiously and that their luxury beggars description, while the poverty of the working class is steadily growing. We must particularly note the further circumstance brought out very clearly by Comrade Levi in the report I have just referred to, namely, the change in the value of money. Money has everywhere depreciated as a result of the debts, the issue of paper currency, etc. The same bourgeois source I have already mentioned, namely, the statement of the Supreme Economic Council of March 8, 1920, has calculated that in Britain the depreciation in the value of currency as against the dollar is approximately one-third, in France and Italy two-thirds, and in Germany as much as 96 per cent.

This fact shows that the "mechanism" of the world capitalist economy is falling apart. The trade relations on which the acquisition of raw materials and the sale of commodities hinge under capitalism cannot go on; they cannot continue to be based on the subordination of a number of countries to a single country—the reason being the change in the value of money. No wealthy country can exist or trade unless it sells its goods and obtains raw materials.

Thus we have a situation in which America, a wealthy country that all countries are subordinate to, cannot buy or sell. And the selfsame Keynes who went through the entire gamut of the Versailles negotiations has been compelled to acknowledge this impossibility despite his unyielding determination to defend capitalism, and all his hatred of Bolshevism. Incidentally, I do not think any communist manifesto, or one that is revolutionary in general, could compare in forcefulness with those pages in Keynes's book which depict Wilson and "Wilsonism" in action. Wilson was the idol of philistines and pacifists like Keynes and a number of heroes of the Second International (and even of the "Two-and-a-Half" International[146]), who exalted the "Fourteen Points"[147] and even wrote "learned" books about the "roots" of Wilson's policy; they hoped that Wilson would save "social peace", reconcile exploiters and exploited, and bring about social reforms. Keynes showed vividly how Wilson was made a fool of, and all these illusions were shattered at the first impact with the practical, mercantile and huckster policy of capital as personified by Clemenceau and Lloyd George. The masses of the workers now see more clearly than ever, from their own experience—and the learned pedants could see it just by reading Keynes's book—that the "roots" of Wilson's policy lay in sanctimonious piffle, petty-bourgeois phrase-mongering, and an utter inability to understand the class struggle.

In consequence of all this, two conditions, two fundamental situations, have inevitably and naturally emerged. On the one hand, the impoverishment of the masses has grown incredibly, primarily among 1,250 million people, i.e., 70 per cent of the world's population. These are the colonial and dependent countries whose inhabitants possess no legal rights, countries "mandated" to the brigands of finance. Besides, the enslavement of the defeated countries has been sanctioned by the Treaty of Versailles and by existing secret treaties regarding Russia, whose validity, it is true, is sometimes about as real as that of the scraps of paper stating that we owe so many thousands of millions. For the first time in world history, we see robbery, slavery, dependence, poverty and starvation imposed upon 1,250 million people by a legal act.

On the other hand, the workers in each of the creditor countries have found themselves in conditions that are intolerable. The war has led to an unprecedented aggravation of all capitalist contradictions, this being the origin of the intense revolutionary ferment that is ever growing. During the war people were put under military discipline, hurled into the ranks of death, or threatened with immediate wartime punishment. Because of the war conditions people could not see the economic realities. Writers, poets, the clergy, the whole press were engaged in nothing but glorifying the war. Now that the war has ended, the exposures have begun: German imperialism with its Peace of Brest-Litovsk has been laid bare; the Treaty of Versailles, which was to have been a victory for imperialism but proved its defeat, has been exposed. Incidentally, the example of Keynes shows that in Europe and America tens and hundreds of thousands of petty bourgeois, intellectuals, and simply more or less literate and educated people, have had to follow the road taken by Keynes, who resigned and threw in the face of the government a book exposing it. Keynes has shown what is taking place and will take place in the minds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people when they realise that all the speeches about a "war for liberty", etc., were sheer deception, and that as a result only a handful of people were enriched, while the others were ruined and reduced to slavery. Is it not a fact that the bourgeois Keynes declares that, to survive and save the British economy, the British must secure the resumption of free commercial intercourse between Germany and Russia? How can this be achieved? By cancelling all debts, as Keynes proposes. This is an idea that has been arrived at not only by Keynes, the learned economist; millions of people are or will be getting the same idea. And millions of people hear bourgeois economists declare that there is no way out except annulling the debts; therefore "damn the Bolsheviks" (who have annulled the debts), and let us appeal to America's "generosity"! I think that, on behalf of the Congress of the Communist International, we should send a message of thanks to these economists, who have been agitating for Bolshevism.

If, on the one hand, the economic position of the masses has become intolerable, and, on the other hand, the disintegration described by Keynes has set in and is growing among the negligible minority of all-powerful victor countries, then we are in the presence of the maturing of the two conditions for the world revolution.

We now have before us a somewhat more complete picture of the whole world. We know what dependence upon a handful of rich men means to 1,250 million people who have been placed in intolerable conditions of existence. On the other hand, when the peoples were presented with the League of Nations Covenant, declaring that the League had put an end to war and would henceforth not permit anyone to break the peace, and when this Covenant, the last hope of working people all over the world, came into force, it proved to be a victory of the first order for us. Before it came into force, people used to say that it was impossible not to impose special conditions on a country like Germany, but when the Covenant was drawn up, everything would come out all right. Yet, when the Covenant was published, the bitterest opponents of Bolshevism were obliged to repudiate it! When the Covenant came into operation, it appeared that a small group of the richest countries, the "Big Four"—in the persons of Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando and Wilson—had been put on the job of creating the new relations! When the machinery of the Covenant was put into operation, this led to a complete breakdown.

We saw this in the case of the wars against Russia. Weak, ruined and crushed, Russia, a most backward country, fought against all the nations, against a league of the rich and powerful states that dominate the world, and emerged victorious. We could not put up a force that was anything like the equal of theirs, and yet we proved the victors. Why was that? Because there was not a jot of unity among them, because each power worked against the other. France wanted Russia to pay her debts and become a formidable force against Germany; Britain wanted to partition Russia, and attempted to seize the Baku oilfields and conclude a treaty with the border states of Russia. Among the official British documents there is a Paper which scrupulously enumerates all the states (fourteen in all) which some six months ago, in December 1919, pledged themselves to take Moscow and Petrograd. Britain based her policy on these states, to whom she granted loans running into millions. All these calculations have now misfired, and all the loans are unrecoverable.

Such is the situation created by the League of Nations. Every day of this Covenant's existence provides the best propaganda for Bolshevism, since the most powerful adherents of the capitalist "order" are revealing that, on every question, they put spokes in one another's wheels. Furious wrangling over the partitioning of Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia and China is going on between Japan, Britain, America and France. The bourgeois press in these countries is full of the bitterest attacks and the angriest statements against their "colleagues" for trying to snatch the booty from under their noses. We see complete discord at the top, among this handful, this very small number of extremely rich countries. There are 1,250 million people who find it impossible to live in the conditions of servitude which "advanced" and civilised capitalism wishes to impose on them: after all, these represent 70 per cent of the world's population. This handful of the richest states—Britain, America and Japan (though Japan was able to plunder the

Eastern, the Asian countries, she cannot constitute an independent financial and military force without support from another country)—these two or three countries are unable to organise economic relations, and are directing their policies toward disrupting policies of their colleagues and partners in the League of Nations. Hence the world crisis; it is these economic roots of the crisis that provide the chief reason of the brilliant successes the Communist International is achieving.

Comrades, we have now come to the question of the revolutionary crisis as the basis of our revolutionary action. And here we must first of all note two widespread errors. On the one hand, bourgeois economists depict this crisis simply as "unrest", to use the elegant expression of the British. On the other hand, revolutionaries sometimes try to prove that the crisis is absolutely insoluble.

This is a mistake. There is no such thing as an absolutely hopeless situation. The bourgeoisie are behaving like barefaced plunderers who have lost their heads; they are committing folly after folly, thus aggravating the situation and hastening their doom. All that is true. But nobody can "prove" that it is absolutely impossible for them to pacify a minority of the exploited with some petty concessions, and suppress some movement or uprising of some section of the oppressed and exploited. To try to "prove" in advance that there is "absolutely" no way out of the situation would be sheer pedantry, or playing with concepts and catchwords. Practice alone can serve as real "proof" in this and similar questions. All over the world, the bourgeois system is experiencing a tremendous revolutionary crisis. The revolutionary parties must now "prove" in practice that they have sufficient understanding and organisation, contact with the exploited masses, and determination and skill to utilise this crisis for a successful, a victorious revolution.

It is mainly to prepare this "proof" that we have gathered at this Congress of the Communist International.

To illustrate to what extent opportunism still prevails among parties that wish to affiliate to the Third International, and how far the work of some parties is removed from preparing the revolutionary class to utilise the revolutionary crisis, I shall quote the leader of the British Independent Labour Party, Ramsay MacDonald. In his book, *Parliament and Revolution*, which deals with the basic problems that are now engaging our attention, MacDonald describes the state of affairs in what is something like a bourgeois pacifist spirit. He admits that there is a revolutionary crisis and that revolutionary sentiments are growing, that the sympathies of the workers are with the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat (note that this refers to Britain) and that the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the present dictatorship of the British bourgeoisie.

But MacDonald remains a thorough-paced bourgeois pacifist and compromiser, a petty bourgeois who dreams of a government that stands above classes. Like all bourgeois liars, sophists and pedants, MacDonald recognises the class struggle merely as a "descriptive fact". He ignores the experience of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries of Russia, the similar experience of Hungary, Germany, etc., in regard to creating a "democratic" government allegedly standing above classes. MacDonald lulls his party and those workers who have the misfortune to regard this bourgeois as a socialist, this philistine as a leader, with the words: "We know that all this [i.e., the revolutionary crisis, the revolutionary ferment] will pass ... settle down". The war, he says, inevitably provoked the crisis, but after the war it will all "settle down", even if not at once!

That is what has been written by a man who is leader of a party that wants to affiliate to the Third International. This is a revelation—the more valuable for its rare outspokenness—of what is no less frequently to be seen in the top ranks of the French Socialist Party and the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, namely, not merely an inability, but also an unwillingness to take advantage, in a revolutionary sense, of the revolutionary crisis, or, in other words, both an inability and an unwillingness to really prepare the party and the class in revolutionary fashion for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

That is the main evil in very many parties which are now leaving the Second International. This is precisely why, in the theses I have submitted to the present Congress, I have dwelt most of all on the tasks connected with *preparations* for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and have given as concrete and exact a definition of them as possible.

Here is another example. A new book against Bolshevism was recently published. An unusually large number of books of this kind are now coming out in Europe and America; the more anti-Bolshevik books are brought out, the more strongly and rapidly mass sympathy for Bolshevism grows. I am referring to Otto Bauer's *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?* This book clearly demonstrates to the Germans the essence of Menshevism, whose shameful role in the Russian revolution is understood well enough by the workers of all countries. Otto Bauer has produced a thoroughgoing Menshevik pamphlet, although he has concealed his own sympathy with Menshevism. In Europe and America, however, more precise information should now be disseminated about what Menshevism actually is, for it is a generic term for all allegedly socialist, Social-Democratic and other trends that are hostile to Bolshevism. It would be dull writing if we Russians were to explain to Europeans what Menshevism is. Otto Bauer has shown that in his book, and we thank in advance the bourgeois and opportunist publishers who will publish it and translate it into various languages. Bauer's book will be a useful if peculiar supplement to the textbooks on communism. Take any paragraph, any argument in Otto Bauer's book and indicate the Menshevism in it, where the roots lie of views that lead up to the actions of the traitors to socialism, of the friends of Kerensky, Scheidemann, etc.—this is a question that could be very usefully and successfully set in "examinations" designed to test whether communism has been properly assimilated. If you cannot answer this question, you are not yet a Communist, and should not join the Communist Party. (*Applause.*)

Otto Bauer has excellently expressed in a single sentence the essence of the views of world opportunism; for this, if we could do as we please in Vienna, we would put up a monument to him in his lifetime. The use of force in the class struggle in modern democracies, Otto Bauer says, would be "violence exercised against the social factors of force".

You may think that this sounds queer and unintelligible. It is an example of what Marxism has been reduced to, of the kind of banality and defence of the exploiters to which the most revolutionary theory *can* be reduced. A German variety of philistinism is required, and you get the "theory" that the "social factors of force" are: number; the degree of organisation; the place held in the process of production and distribution; activity and education. If a rural agricultural labourer or an urban working man practises revolutionary violence against a landowner or a capitalist, that is no dictatorship of the proletariat, no violence against the exploiters and the oppressors of the people. Oh, no! This is "violence against the social factors of force".

Perhaps my example sounds something like a jest. However, such is the nature of present-day opportunism that its struggle against Bolshevism becomes a jest. The task of involving the working class, all its thinking elements, in the struggle between international Menshevism (the MacDonalds, Otto Bauers and Co.) and Bolshevism is highly useful and very urgent to Europe and America.

Here we must ask: how is the persistence of such trends in Europe to be explained? Why is this opportunism stronger in Western Europe than in our country? It is because the culture of the advanced countries has been, and still is, the result of their being able to live at the expense of a thousand million oppressed people. It is because the capitalists of these countries obtain a great deal more in this way than they could obtain as profits by plundering the workers in their own countries.

Before the war, it was calculated that the three richest countries—Britain, France and Germany—got between eight and ten thousand million francs a year from the export of capital alone, apart from other sources.

It goes without saying that, out of this tidy sum, at least five hundred millions can be spent as a sop to the labour leaders and the labour aristocracy, i.e., on all sorts of bribes. The whole thing boils down to nothing but bribery. It is done in a thousand different ways: by increasing cultural facilities in the largest centres, by creating educational institutions, and by providing co-operative, trade union and parliamentary leaders with thousands of cushy jobs. This is done wherever present-day civilised capitalist relations exist. It is these thousands of millions in superprofits that form the economic basis of opportunism in the working-class movement. In America, Britain and France we see a far greater persistence of the opportunist leaders, of the upper crust of the working class, the labour aristocracy; they offer stronger resistance to the Communist movement. That is why we must be prepared to find it harder for the European and American workers' parties to get rid of this disease than was the case in our country. We know that enormous successes have been achieved in the treatment of this disease since the Third International was formed, but we have not yet finished the job; the purging of the workers' parties, the revolutionary parties of the proletariat all over the world, of bourgeois influences, of the opportunists in their ranks, is very far from complete.

I shall not dwell on the concrete manner in which we must do that; that is dealt with in my published theses. My task consists in indicating the deep economic roots of this phenomenon. The disease is a protracted one; the cure takes longer than the optimists hoped it would. Opportunism is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is bourgeois socialism, not proletarian socialism. It has been shown in practice that working-class activists who follow the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeois themselves. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power. This has been proved, not only by the history of the Kerensky regime in Russia; it has also been proved by the democratic republic in Germany under its Social-Democratic government, as well as by Albert Thomas's attitude towards his bourgeois government. It has been proved by similar experience in Britain and the United States. This is where our principal enemy is, an enemy we must overcome. We must leave this Congress firmly resolved to carry on this struggle to the very end, in all parties. That is our main task.

Compared with this task, the rectification of the errors of the "Left" trend in communism will be an easy one. In a number of countries anti-parliamentarism is to be seen, which has not been so much introduced by people of petty-bourgeois origin as fostered by certain advanced contingents of the proletariat out of hatred for the old parliamentarism, out of a legitimate, proper and necessary hatred for the conduct of members of parliament in Britain, France, Italy, in all lands. Directives must be issued by the Communist International and the comrades must be made more familiar with the experience of Russia, with the significance of a genuinely proletarian political party. Our work will consist in accomplishing this task. The fight against these errors in the proletarian movement, against these shortcomings, will be a thousand times easier than fighting against those bourgeois who, in the guise of reformists, belong to the old parties of the Second International and conduct the whole of their work in a bourgeois, no proletarian, spirit.

Comrades, in conclusion I shall deal with one other aspect of the subject. Our comrade, the chairman, has said that our Congress merits the title of a World Congress. I think he is right, particularly because we have here quite a number of representatives of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and backward countries. This is only a small beginning, but the important thing is that a beginning has been made. At this Congress we see taking place a union between revolutionary proletarians of the capitalist, advanced countries, and the revolutionary masses of those countries where there is no or hardly any proletariat, i.e., the oppressed masses of colonial, Eastern countries. It is on ourselves that the consolidation of unity depends, and I am sure we shall achieve it. World imperialism shall fall when the revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers in each country, overcoming resistance from petty-bourgeois elements and the influence of the small upper crust of labour aristocrats, merges with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions of people who have hitherto stood beyond the pale of history, and have been regarded merely as the object of history.

The imperialist war has helped the revolution: from the colonies, the backward countries, and the isolation they lived in, the bourgeoisie levied soldiers for this imperialist war. The British bourgeoisie impressed on the soldiers from India that it was the duty of the Indian peasants to defend Great Britain against Germany; the French bourgeoisie impressed on soldiers from the French colonies that it was their duty to defend France. They taught them the use of arms, a very useful thing, for which we might express our deep gratitude to the bourgeoisie—express our gratitude on behalf of all the Russian workers and peasants, and particularly on behalf of all the Russian Red Army. The imperialist war has drawn the dependent peoples into world history. And one of the most important tasks now confronting us is to consider how the foundation-stone of the organisation of the Soviet movement can be laid in the *non*-capitalist countries. Soviets are possible there; they will not be workers' Soviets, but peasants' Soviets, or Soviets of working people.

Much work will have to be done; errors will be inevitable; many difficulties will be encountered along this road. It is the fundamental task of the Second Congress to elaborate or indicate the practical principles that will enable the work, till now carried on in an unorganised fashion among hundreds of millions of people, to be carried on in an organised, coherent and systematic fashion.

Now, a year or a little more after the First Congress of the Communist International, we have emerged victors over the Second International; it is not only among the workers of the civilised countries that the ideas of the Soviets have spread; it is not only to them that they have become known and intelligible. The workers of all lands are ridiculing the wiseacres, not a few of whom call themselves socialists and argue in a learned or almost learned manner about the Soviet "system", as the German systematists are fond of calling it, or the Soviet "idea" as the British Guild Socialists call it. Not infrequently, these arguments about the Soviet "system" or "idea" becloud the workers' eyes and their minds. However, the workers are brushing this pedantic rubbish aside and are taking up the weapon provided by the Soviets. A recognition of the role and significance of the Soviets has now also spread to the lands of the East.

The groundwork has been laid for the Soviet movement all over the East, all over Asia, among all the colonial peoples.

The proposition that the exploited must rise up against the exploiters and establish their Soviets is not a very complex one. After our experience, after two and a half years of the existence of the Soviet Republic in Russia, and after the First Congress of the Third International, this idea is becoming accessible to hundreds of millions of people oppressed by the exploiters all over the world. We in Russia are often obliged to compromise, to bide our time, since we are weaker than the international imperialists, yet we know that we are defending the interests of this mass of a thousand and a quarter million people. For the time being, we are hampered by barriers, prejudices and ignorance which are receding into the past with every passing hour; but we are more and more becoming representatives and genuine defenders of this 70 per cent of the world's population, this mass of working and exploited people. It is with pride that we can say: at the First Congress we were in fact merely propagandists; we were only spreading the fundamental ideas among the world's proletariat; we only issued the call for struggle; we were merely asking where the people were who were capable of taking this path. Today the advanced proletariat is everywhere with us. A proletarian army exists everywhere, although sometimes it is poorly organised and needs reorganising. If our comrades in all lands help us now to organise a united army, no shortcomings will prevent us from accomplishing our task. That task is the world proletarian revolution, the creation of a world Soviet republic. (*Prolonged applause.*)

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SPEECH ON THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY DELIVERED AT THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

JULY 23, 1920

Comrades, I would like to make a few remarks concerning the speeches of Comrades Tanner and McLaine. Tanner says that he stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but he does not see the dictatorship of the proletariat quite in the way we do. He says that by the dictatorship of the proletariat we actually mean the dictatorship of the organised and class-conscious minority of the proletariat.

True enough, in the era of capitalism, when the masses of the workers are subjected to constant exploitation and cannot develop their human capacities, the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can involve only a minority of their class. A political party can comprise only a minority of a class, in the same way as the really class-conscious workers in any capitalist society constitute only a minority of all workers. We are therefore obliged to recognise that it is only this class-conscious minority that can direct and lead the broad masses of the workers. And if Comrade Tanner says that he is opposed to parties, but at the same time is in favour of a minority that represents the best organised and most revolutionary workers showing the way to the entire proletariat, then I say that there is really no difference between us. What is this organised minority? If this minority is really class-conscious, if it is able to lead the masses, if it is able to reply to every question that appears on the order of the day, then it is a party in reality. But if comrades like Tanner, to whom we pay special heed as representatives of a mass movement—which cannot, without a certain exaggeration, be said of the representatives of the British Socialist Party—if these comrades are in favour of there being a minority that will fight resolutely for the dictatorship of the proletariat and will educate the masses of the workers along these lines, then this minority is in reality nothing but a party. Comrade Tanner says that this minority should organise and lead the entire mass of workers. If Comrade Tanner and the other comrades of the Shop Stewards' group and the Industrial Workers of the World accept this—and we see from the daily talks we have had with them that they do accept it—if they approve the idea that the class-conscious Communist minority of the working class leads the proletariat, then they must also agree that this is exactly the meaning of all our resolutions. In that case the only difference between us lies in their avoidance of the word "party" because there exists among the British comrades a certain mistrust of political parties. They can conceive of political parties only in the image of the parties of Gompers and Henderson, parties of parliamentary smart dealers and traitors to the working class. But if, by parliamentarism, they mean what exists in Britain and America today, then we too are opposed to such parliamentarism and to such political parties. What we want is new and different parties. We want parties that will be in constant and real contact with the masses and will be able to lead those masses.

I now come to the third question I want to touch upon in connection with Comrade McLaine's speech. He is in favour of the British Communist Party affiliating to the Labour Party. I have already expressed my opinion on this score in my theses on affiliation to the Third International.* In my pamphlet I left the question open. However, after discussing the matter with a number of comrades, I have come to the conclusion that the decision to remain within the Labour Party is the only correct tactic. But here is Comrade Tanner, who declares, "Don't be too dogmatic." I consider his remark quite out of place here. Comrade Ramsay says: "Please let us British Communists decide this question for ourselves." What would the International be like if every little group were to come along and say: "Some of us are in favour of this thing and some are against; leave it to us to decide the matter for ourselves"? What then would be the use of having an International, a congress, and all this discussion? Comrade McLaine spoke only of the role of a political party. But the same applies to the trade unions and to parliamentarism. It is quite true that a larger section of the finest revolutionaries are against affiliation to the Labour Party because they are opposed to parliamentarism as a means of struggle. Perhaps it would be best to refer this question to a commission, where it should be discussed and studied, and then decided at this very Congress of the Communist International. We cannot agree that it concerns only the British Communists. We must say, in general, which are the correct tactics.

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* See pp. 422-24 of this book.—*Ed.*

I will now deal with some of Comrade McLaine's arguments concerning the question of the British Labour Party. We must say frankly that the Party of Communists can join the Labour Party only on condition that it preserves full freedom of criticism and is able to conduct its own policy. This is of supreme importance. When, in this connection, Comrade Serrati speaks of class collaboration, I affirm that this will not be class collaboration. When the Italian comrades tolerate, in their party, opportunists like Turati and Co., i. e., bourgeois elements, that is indeed class collaboration. In this instance, however, with regard to the British Labour Party, it is simply a matter of collaboration between the advanced minority of the British workers and their vast majority. Members of the Labour Party are all members of trade unions. It has a very unusual structure, to be found in no other country. It is an organisation that embraces four million workers out of the six or seven million organised in trade unions. They are not asked to state what their political opinions are. Let Comrade Serrati prove to me that anyone there will prevent us from exercising our right of criticism. Only by proving that, will you prove Comrade McLaine wrong. The British Socialist Party can quite freely call Henderson a traitor and yet remain in the Labour Party. Here we have collaboration between the vanguard of the working class and the rearguard, the backward workers. This collaboration is so important to the entire movement that we categorically insist on the British Communists serving as a link between the Party, that is, the minority of the working class, and the rest of the workers. If the minority is unable to lead the masses and establish close links with them, then it is not a party, and is worthless in general, even if it calls itself a party or the National Shop Stewards' Committee—as far as I know, the Shop Stewards' Committees in Britain have a National Committee, a central body, and that is a step towards a party. Consequently, until it is refuted that the British Labour Party consists of proletarians, this is co-operation between the vanguard of the working class and the backward workers; if this co-operation is not carried on systematically, the Communist Party will be worthless and there can be no question of the dictatorship of the proletariat at all. If our Italian comrades cannot produce more convincing arguments, we shall have to definitely settle the question later here, on the basis of what we know—and we shall come to the conclusion that affiliation is the correct tactic.

Comrades Tanner and Ramsay tell us that the majority of British Communists will not accept affiliation. But must we always agree with the majority? Not at all. If they have not yet understood which are the correct tactics, then perhaps it would be better to wait. Even the parallel existence for a time of two parties would be better than refusing to reply to the question as to which tactics are correct. Of course, acting on the experience of all Congress delegates and on the arguments that have been brought forward here, you will not insist on passing a resolution here and now, calling for the immediate formation of a single Communist Party in each country. That is impossible. But we can frankly express our opinion, and give directives. We must study in a special commission the question raised by the British delegation and then we shall say: affiliation to the Labour Party is the correct tactic. If the majority is against it, we must organise a separate minority. That will be of educational value. If the masses of the British workers still believe in the old tactics, we shall verify our conclusions at the next congress. We cannot, however, say that this question concerns Britain alone—that would mean copying the worst habits of the Second International. We must express our opinion frankly. If the British Communists do not reach agreement, and if a mass party is not formed, a split is inevitable one way or another.*

Bulletin of the Second Congress of the Communist International No. 5,
August 5, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 235-39

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* Issue No. 5 of the *Bulletin of the Second Congress of the Communist International* gave the concluding sentences of this speech as follows:

"We must express our opinion frankly, whatever it may be. If the British Communists do not reach agreement on the question of the organisation of the mass movement, and if a split takes place on this issue, then better a split than rejection of the organisation of the mass movement. It is better to rise to definite and sufficiently clear tactics and ideology than to go on remaining in the previous chaos."—*Ed.*

REPORT
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL AND THE COLONIAL QUESTIONS TO THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL
JULY 26, 1920

Comrades, I shall confine myself to a brief introduction, after which Comrade Maring, who has been secretary to our commission, will give you a detailed account of the changes we have made in the theses. He will be followed by Comrade Roy, who has formulated the supplementary theses. Our commission have unanimously adopted both the preliminary theses, as amended, and the supplementary theses. We have thus reached complete unanimity on all major issues. I shall now make a few brief remarks.

First, what is the cardinal idea underlying our theses? It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasise this distinction. In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the Communist International to establish the concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems.

The characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world, as we now see, being divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces. The vast majority of the world's population, over a thousand million, perhaps even 1,250 million people, if we take the total population of the world as 1,750 million, in other words, about 70 per cent of the world's population, belong to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China, or else, conquered by some big imperialist power, have become greatly dependent on that power by virtue of peace treaties. This idea of distinction, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, runs through the theses, not only the first theses published earlier over my signature, but also those submitted by Comrade Roy. The latter were framed chiefly from the standpoint of the situation in India and other big Asian countries oppressed by Britain. Herein lies their great importance to us.

The second basic idea in our theses is that, in the present world situation following the imperialist war, reciprocal relations between peoples and the world political system as a whole are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. The Communist parties, in civilised and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting-point.

Third, I should like especially to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. This is a question that has given rise to certain differences. We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the Communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the "bourgeois-democratic" movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consists of peasants who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties in these backward countries, if indeed they can emerge in them, can pursue communist tactics and a communist policy, without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support. However, the objections have been raised that, if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, since the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain *rapprochement* between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often—perhaps even in most cases—the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i. e., joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably proved in the commission, and we decided that the only correct attitude was to take this distinction into account and, in nearly all cases, substitute the term "national-revolutionary" for the term "bourgeois-democratic". The significance of this change is that we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organising in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, to whom the heroes of the Second International also belong. Reformist parties already exist in the colonial countries, and in some cases their spokesmen call themselves Social-Democrats and socialists. The distinction I have referred to has been made in all the theses with the result, I think, that our view is now formulated much more precisely.

Next, I would like to make a remark on the subject of peasants' Soviets. The Russian Communists' practical activities in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, etc., have confronted us with the question of how to apply the communist tactics and policy in pre-capitalist conditions. The preponderance of pre-capitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them. There is practically no industrial proletariat in these countries. Nevertheless, we have assumed, we must assume, the role of leader even there. Experience has shown us that tremendous difficulties have to be surmounted in these countries. However, the practical results of our work have also shown that despite these difficulties we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action, even where a proletariat is practically non-existent. This work has been more difficult for us than it will be for comrades in the West-European countries, because in Russia the proletariat is engrossed in the work of state administration. It will readily be understood that peasants living in conditions of semi-feudal dependence can easily assimilate and give effect to the idea of Soviet organisation. It is also clear that the oppressed masses, those who are exploited, not only by merchant capital but also by the feudalists, and by a state based on feudalism, can apply this weapon, this type of organisation, in their conditions too. The idea of Soviet organisation is a simple one, and is applicable, not only to proletarian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations. Our experience in this respect is not as yet very considerable. However, the debate in the commission, in which several representatives from colonial countries participated, demonstrated convincingly that the Communist International's theses should point out that peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with pre-capitalist relations, and that it is the absolute duty of Communist parties and of elements prepared to form Communist parties, everywhere to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants' Soviets or of working people's Soviets, this to include backward and colonial countries. Wherever conditions permit, they should at once make attempts to set up Soviets of the working people.

This opens up a very interesting and very important field for our practical work. So far our joint experience in this respect has not been extensive, but more and more data will gradually accumulate. It is unquestionable that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should give help to the working masses of the backward countries, and that the backward countries can emerge from their present stage of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to give them support.

There was quite a lively debate on this question in the commission, not only in connection with the theses I signed, but still more in connection with Comrade Roy's theses, which he will defend here, and certain amendments to which were unanimously adopted.

The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and the backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

The necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience. It has, however, been definitely established that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world.

I would also like to emphasise the importance of revolutionary work by the Communist parties, not only in their own, but also in the colonial countries, and particularly among the troops employed by the exploiting nations to keep the colonial peoples in subjection.

Comrade Quelch of the British Socialist Party spoke of this in our commission. He said that the rank-and-file British worker would consider it treasonable to help the enslaved nations in their uprisings against British rule. True, the jingoist- and chauvinist-minded labour aristocrats of Britain and America present a very great danger to socialism, and are a bulwark of the Second International. Here we are confronted with the greatest treachery on the part of leaders and workers belonging to this bourgeois International. The colonial question has been discussed in the Second International as well. The Basle Manifesto is quite clear on this point, too. The parties of the Second International have pledged themselves to revolutionary action, but they have given no sign of genuine revolutionary work or of assistanceto the exploited and dependent nations in their revolt against the oppressor nations. This, I think, applies also to most of the parties that have withdrawn from the Second International and wish to join the Third International. We must proclaim this publicly for all to hear, and it is irrefutable. We shall see if any attempt is made to deny it.

All these considerations have formed the basis of our resolutions, which undoubtedly are too lengthy but will nevertheless, I am sure, prove of use and will promote the development and organisation of genuine revolutionary work in connection with the national and the colonial questions. And that is our principal task.

Bulletin of the Second Congress of the Communist International No. 6,
August 7, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31, pp. 240-45

INTERVIEW WITH A FOREIGN JOURNALIST JULY 20, 1920[148]

Lenin made the following statements to a foreign journalist:

"It may be that the British proposal[149] is nothing but a scrap of paper. But perhaps it could lead to real peace in the east of Europe. If the British diplomats imagine that they can fool us, then they are making a grave mistake: for every paper proposal we will answer with a paper proposal, and we will only answer real action with action. British policy is unstable, it is subject to continual vacillation. On the one hand—Lloyd George; on the other—Churchill; and between them Lord Curzon, who would like to see Russia weak. But next to them stands the great mass of the British people with whom they have to reckon. And we rely on these masses most of all. Peace between Britain and Russia is directly dependent on the strength of our Red Army and on the determination of the British proletariat."

Asked what he thought of relations between the Allies, Lenin replied:

"Either the British proposal is a manoeuvre, or the existence of the famous Entente will in future be impossible. The very fact that Britain is accepting 'Red' money will compel the Allies to do the same. Britain has hitherto acted independently, and it should be assumed that her policy is aimed directly against France. The treaty with Persia was concluded without the mediation of the League of Nations. Britain's Turkish policy contradicts the interests of France and Italy. Finally, the British proposal to Soviet Russia was sent against France's will. If France continues to support Poland, this will lead to an unavoidable quarrel with Britain. However, if she leaves Poland to the whim of fate, she will lose her last real ally against Germany."

The journalist also asked Lenin: "Will the Communist International stop its propaganda abroad in the event of mutual understanding being arrived at between Russia and Britain?" Lenin replied:

"The very fact that Soviet Russia exists is the best propaganda for communism in the whole world."

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Berner Tagwacht, July 21, 1920

Translated from the German Published in English for the first time

SPEECH ON AFFILIATION TO THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY DELIVERED TO THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AUGUST 6, 1920[150]

Comrades, Comrade Gallacher began his speech by expressing regret at our having been compelled to listen here for the hundredth and the thousandth time to sentences that Comrade McLaine and other British comrades have reiterated a thousand times in speeches, newspapers and magazines. I think there is no need for regret. The old International used the method of referring such questions for decision to the individual parties in the countries concerned. That was a grave error. We may not be fully familiar with the conditions in one party or another, but in this case we are dealing with the principles underlying a Communist Party's tactics. That is very important and, in the name of the Third International, we must herewith clearly state the communist point of view.

First of all, I should like to mention a slight inaccuracy on the part of Comrade McLaine, which cannot be agreed to. He called the Labour Party the political organisation of the trade union movement, and later repeated the statement when he said that the Labour Party is "the political expression of the workers organised in trade unions". I have met the same view several times in the paper of the British Socialist Party. It is erroneous, and is partly the cause of the opposition, fully justified in some measure, coming from the British revolutionary workers. Indeed, the concepts "political department of the trade unions" or "political expression" of the trade union movement, are erroneous. Of course, most of the Labour Party's members are workingmen. However, whether or not a party is really a political party of the workers does not depend solely upon a membership of workers but also upon the men that lead it, and the content of its actions and its political tactics. Only this latter determines whether we really have before us a political party of the proletariat. Regarded from this, the only correct, point of view, the Labour Party is a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although made up of workers, it is led by reactionaries, and the worst kind of reactionaries at that, who act quite in the spirit of the bourgeoisie. It is an organisation of the bourgeoisie, which exists to systematically dupe the workers with the aid of the British Noskes and Scheidemanns.

We have also heard another point of view, defended by Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and Comrade Gallacher, who have voiced their opinion of the matter. What was the substance of the speeches delivered by Gallacher and many of his friends? They have told us that they are insufficiently linked with the masses. But take the instance of the British Socialist Party, they went on. It is still less linked with the masses and it is a very weak party. Comrade Gallacher has told us here how he and his comrades have organised, and done so really splendidly, the revolutionary movement in Glasgow, in Scotland, how in their wartime tactics they manoeuvred skilfully, how they gave able support to the petty-bourgeois pacifists Ramsay MacDonald and Snowden when they came to Glasgow, and used this support to organise a mass movement against the war.

It is our aim to integrate this new and excellent revolutionary movement—represented here by Comrade Gallacher and his friends—into a Communist Party with genuinely communist, i.e., Marxist tactics. That is our task today. On the one hand, the British Socialist Party is too weak and incapable of properly carrying on agitation among the masses; on the other hand, we have the younger revolutionary elements so well represented here by Comrade Gallacher, who, although in touch with the masses, are not a political party, and in this sense are even weaker than the British Socialist Party and are totally unable to organise their political work. Under these circumstances, we must express our frank opinion on the correct tactics. When, in speaking of the British Socialist Party, Comrade Gallacher said that it is "hopelessly reformist", he was undoubtedly exaggerating. But the general tenor and content of all the resolutions we have adopted here show with absolute clarity that we demand a change, in this spirit, in the tactics of the British Socialist Party; the only correct tactics of Gallacher's friends will consist in their joining the Communist Party without delay, so as to modify its tactics in the spirit of the resolutions adopted here. If you have so many supporters that you are able to organise mass meetings in Glasgow, it will not be difficult for you to bring more than ten thousand new members into the Party. The latest Conference of the British Socialist Party, held in London three or four days ago decided to assume the name of the Communist Party and introduced into its programme a clause providing for participation in parliamentary elections and affiliation to the Labour Party. Ten thousand organised members were represented at the Conference. It will therefore not be at all difficult for the Scottish comrades to bring into this "Communist Party of Great Britain" more than ten thousand revolutionary workers who are better versed in the art of working among the masses, and thus to modify the old tactics of the British Socialist Party in the sense of better agitation and more revolutionary action. In the commission, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst pointed out several times that Britain needed "Lefts". I, of course, replied that this was absolutely true, but that one must not overdo this "Leftism". Furthermore she said that they were better pioneers, but for the moment were rather noisy. I do not take this in a bad sense, but rather in a good one, namely, that they are better able to carry on revolutionary agitation. We do and should value this. We expressed this in all our resolutions, for we always emphasise that we can consider a party to be a workers' party only when it is really linked up with the masses and fights against the old and quite corrupt leaders, against both the Right-wing chauvinists and those who, like the Right Independents in Germany, take up an intermediate position. We have asserted and reiterated this a dozen times and more in all our resolutions, which means that we demand a transformation of the old party, in the sense of bringing it closer to the masses.

Sylvia Pankhurst also asked: "Is it possible for a Communist Party to join another political party which still belongs to the Second International?" She replied that it was not. It should, however, be borne in mind that the British Labour Party is in a very special position: it is a highly original type of party, or rather, it is not at all a party in the ordinary sense of the word. It is made up of members of all trade unions, and has a membership of about four million, and allows sufficient freedom to all affiliated political parties. It thus includes a vast number of British workers who follow the lead of the worst bourgeois elements, the social-traitors, who are even worse than Scheidemann, Noske and similar people. At the same time, however, the Labour Party has let the British Socialist Party into its ranks, permitting it to have its own press organs, in which members of the selfsame Labour Party can freely and openly declare that the party leaders are social-traitors. Comrade McLaine has cited quotations from such statements by the British Socialist Party. I, too, can certify that I have seen in *The Call*, organ of the British Socialist Party, statements that the Labour Party leaders are social-patriots and social-traitors. This shows that a party affiliated to the Labour Party is able, not only to severely criticise but openly and specifically to mention the old leaders by name, and call them social-traitors. This is a very original situation: a party which unites enormous masses of workers, so that it might seem a political party, is nevertheless obliged to grant its members complete latitude. Comrade McLaine has told us here that, at the Labour Party Conference, the British Scheidemanns were obliged to openly raise the question of affiliation to the Third International, and that all party branches and sections were obliged to discuss the matter. In such circumstances, it would be a mistake not to join this party.

In a private talk, Comrade Pankhurst said to me: "If we are real revolutionaries and join the Labour Party, these gentlemen will expel us." But that would not be bad at all. Our resolution says that we favour affiliation insofar as the Labour Party permits sufficient freedom of criticism. On that point we are absolutely consistent. Comrade McLaine has emphasised that the conditions now prevailing in Britain are such that, should it so desire, a political party may remain a revolutionary workers' party even if it is connected with a special kind of labour organisation of four million members, which is half trade union and half political and is headed by bourgeois leaders. In such circumstances it would be highly erroneous for the best revolutionary elements not to do everything possible to remain in such a party. Let the Thomases and other social-traitors, whom you have called by that name, expel you. That will have an excellent effect upon the mass of the British workers.

The comrades have emphasised that the labour aristocracy is stronger in Britain than in any other country. That is true. After all, the labour aristocracy has existed in Britain, not for decades but for centuries. The British bourgeoisie, which has had far more experience—democratic experience—than that of any other country, has been able to buy workers over and to create among them a sizable stratum, greater than in any other country, but one that is not so great compared with the masses of the workers. This stratum is thoroughly imbued with bourgeois prejudices and pursues a definitely bourgeois reformist policy. In Ireland, for instance, there are two hundred thousand British soldiers who are applying ferocious terror methods to suppress the Irish. The British Socialists are not conducting any revolutionary propaganda among these soldiers, though our resolutions clearly state that we can accept into the Communist International only those British parties that conduct genuinely revolutionary propaganda among the British workers and soldiers. I emphasise that we have heard no objections to this either here or in the commissions.

Comrades Gallacher and Sylvia Pankhurst cannot deny that. They cannot refute the fact that, in the ranks of the Labour Party, the British Socialist Party enjoys sufficient freedom to write that certain leaders of the Labour Party are traitors; that these old leaders represent the interests of the bourgeoisie; that they are agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement. They cannot deny all this because it is the absolute truth. When Communists enjoy such freedom, it is their duty to join the Labour Party if they take due account of the experience of revolutionaries in all countries, not only of the Russian revolution (for here we are not at a Russian congress but at one that is international). Comrade Gallacher has said ironically that in the present instance we are under the influence of the British Socialist Party. That is not true; it is the experience of all revolutions in all countries that has convinced us. We think that we must say that to the masses. The British Communist Party must retain the freedom necessary to expose and criticise the betrayers of the working class, who are much more powerful in Britain than in any other country. That is readily understandable. Comrade Gallacher is wrong in asserting that by advocating affiliation to the Labour Party we shall repel the best elements among the British workers. We must test this by experience. We are convinced that all the resolutions and decisions that will be adopted by our Congress will be published in all British revolutionary socialist newspapers and that all the branches and sections will be able to discuss them. The entire content of our resolutions shows with crystal clarity that we are representatives of working-class revolutionary tactics in all countries and that our aim is to fight against the old reformism and opportunism. The events reveal that our tactics are indeed defeating the old reformism. In that case the finest revolutionary elements in the working class, who are dissatisfied with the slow progress being made—and progress in Britain will perhaps be slower than in other countries—will all come over to us. Progress is slow because the British bourgeoisie are in a position to create better conditions for the labour aristocracy and thereby to retard the revolutionary movement in Britain. That is why the British comrades should strive, not only to revolutionise the masses—they are doing that splendidly (as Comrade Gallacher has shown), but must at the same time strive to create a real working-class political party. Comrade Gallacher and Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, who have both spoken here, do not as yet belong to a revolutionary Communist Party. That excellent proletarian organisation, the Shop Stewards' movement, has not yet joined a political party. If you organise politically you will find that our tactics are based on a correct understanding of political developments in the past decades, and that a real revolutionary party can be created only when it absorbs the best elements of the revolutionary class and uses every opportunity to fight the reactionary leaders, wherever they show themselves.

If the British Communist Party starts by acting in a revolutionary manner in the Labour Party, and if the Hendersons are obliged to expel this Party, that will be a great victory for the communist and revolutionary working-class movement in Britain.

First published in full in 1921
in the book *The Second Congress of the Communist International. Verbatim Report.* Published by the Communist International, Petrograd

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 257-63

From POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.C.P. (B.) TO THE NINTH ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) SEPTEMBER 22, 1920

Newspaper Report

Our presence at the walls of Warsaw has had, as another consequence, a powerful effect on the revolutionary movement in Europe, particularly in Britain. Though we have not been able to affect the industrial proletariat of Poland beyond the Vistula and in Warsaw (this being one of the main reasons for our defeat), we have succeeded in influencing the British proletariat and in raising the movement there to an unprecedented level, to an absolutely new stage in the revolution. When the British Government presented an ultimatum to us, it transpired that it would first have to consult the British workers. The latter, nine-tenths of whose leaders are out-and-out Mensheviks, replied to the ultimatum by forming a Council of Action.[151]

Alarmed by these developments, the British press raised a hullabaloo about what it called the "duality of government". It had every reason to say so. Britain found herself at the same stage of political relationships as Russia after February 1917, when the Soviets were obliged to scrutinise every step taken by the bourgeois government. This Council of Action unites all workers, irrespective of party, just like our All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the period when Gotz, Dan and others were running things, a kind of association which runs parallel with the government, and in which the Mensheviks are forced to act in a semi-Bolshevik way. Just as our Mensheviks finally got confounded and helped win over the masses to our side, the Mensheviks in the Council of Action have been forced by the inexorable course of events to clear the way to the Bolshevist revolution for the worker masses of Britain. According to testimony by competent persons, the British Mensheviks already consider themselves a government, and are prepared to replace the bourgeois government in the near future. This will be the next step in the general process of the British proletarian revolution.

These tremendous changes in the British working-class movement are exerting a powerful influence on the world working-class movement, and first and foremost on the working-class movement in France.

Pravda No. 216 and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 216, September 29, 1920	*Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 276-77

From SPEECH DELIVERED AT A CONGRESS OF LEATHER INDUSTRY WORKERS
OCTOBER 2, 1920

You know that we harboured no plans of conquest. I said at the beginning of my speech[152] that in April 1920 we stood east of Minsk and proposed peace on those terms, if only we could save the workers and peasants of Russia from a new war. But since war has been forced upon us, we must fight it to a victorious finish. The Peace of Versailles is oppressing hundreds of millions of people. It is robbing Germany of coal, robbing her of her milch herds, and is reducing her to an unparalleled and unprecedented state of servitude. Even the most backward sections of Germany's peasant population have declared that they are for the Bolsheviks, that they are allies of the Bolsheviks; that is quite natural, for, in its struggle for existence, the Soviet Republic is the only force in the world which is combating imperialism—and imperialism now means an alliance of France, Britain and America. We are approaching the hub of the present international system. When the Red troops approached the frontier of Poland, the Red Army's victorious advance created an unprecedented political crisis. The main feature of this crisis was that, when the British Government threatened us with war, and told us that if we advanced any farther they would fight us and send their warships against us, the British workers declared that they would not permit this war. Let me tell you that Bolshevism is spreading among the British workers. However, the Communists there are just as weak today as we were in March, April and May 1917, when we had one-tenth of the votes at conferences and congresses. At the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets in June 1917, we had no more than 13 per cent of the votes. A similar situation exists in Great Britain: there the Bolsheviks are in an insignificant minority. But the point is that the British Mensheviks have always been opposed to Bolshevism and direct revolution, and have favoured an alliance with the bourgeoisie. Today, however, the old leaders of the British workers have begun to waver and have changed their minds: they were opposed to the dictatorship of the working class, but now they have come over to our side. They have set up a Council of Action over there in Britain. This is a radical change in British politics. Alongside of Parliament, which in Great Britain is now elected by almost universal suffrage (since 1918), there has arisen a self-appointed Council of Action which relies on support from the workers' trade unions with a membership of over six million. When the government wanted to begin a war against Soviet Russia, the workers declared that they would not allow it, and said they would not let the French fight either, because the French depend upon British coal, and should this industry come to a standstill it would be a severe blow to France.

I repeat that this was a tremendous turning-point in British politics. Its significance to Great Britain is as great as the revolution of February 1917 was to us. The revolution of February 1917 overthrew tsarism and set up a bourgeois republic in Russia. There is no republic in Great Britain, but her thoroughly bourgeois monarchy has existed for many centuries. The workers can vote in the parliamentary elections, but all foreign policy is conducted outside Parliament, for it is the province of the Cabinet. We have long known that the British Government are waging an undercover war on Russia and are helping Yudenich, Kolchak and Denikin. We have often met with statements in the British press to the effect that Great Britain has no right to send a single soldier to Russia. Who, then, voted for this measure? What act of Parliament authorised war on Russia in aid of Yudenich and Kolchak? There have been no such acts, and by actions like this Great Britain has violated her own constitution. What then is this Council of Action? Independently of Parliament, this Council of Action has presented an ultimatum to the government on behalf of the workers. This is a step towards dictatorship, and there is no other way out of the situation. This is taking place in Great Britain, which is an imperialist country with 400 or 500 million people enslaved in her colonies. She is a most important country, which rules the greater part of the population of the earth. The advance on Poland has led to such a turn of affairs that the British Mensheviks have entered into an alliance with the Russian Bolsheviks. That is what this offensive has done.

The entire British bourgeois press declared that the Council of Action meant the Soviets. They were right. It did not call itself by that name, but actually that is what it was. It is the same kind of dual power as we had under Kerensky from March 1917 onwards, a time when the Provisional Government was considered the only government, but actually could do nothing of significance without the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, a time when we said to the Soviets: "Take over all power." A similar situation has now arisen in Britain, and the Mensheviks on this "Council of Action" have been obliged to adopt an anticonstitutional course. This will give you some idea of what our war with Poland has meant. Though the international bourgeoisie are still immeasurably stronger than we are, and the British Government has put the whole blame on Kamenev, expelled him from Great Britain, and will not let him return, this is but an empty and ridiculous threat, for the best defenders of the American and British capitalists, the moderate British labour leaders—those Right Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries—have joined the Council of Action, and Great Britain is now facing a new crisis. She is now threatened with a coal miners' general strike. The strikers are demanding, not only higher pay but a cut in coal prices. One wave of strikes is following another in Great Britain. The strikers are demanding higher wages. However, if the workers win a 10 per cent wage rise today, prices go up 20 per cent tomorrow. Prices are rising, and the workers see that their struggle gets them nowhere and that, despite wage increases, they are losing, because of the higher prices. So the workers are demanding, not only higher pay for the coal miners but lower coal prices as well. This has led to the British bourgeois press panicking in even greater horror than when the Red Army entered Poland.

Pravda Nos. 225 and 226, October 9 and 10, 1920	*Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 306-08

TRANSCRIPT OF A TALK WITH WILLIAM PAUL [153]

October 6, 1920

Lenin passed on to review the position of the Communist Party in Britain. He said that the Labour Party, & Henderson & Thomas etc., by refusing to accept the application of the Communist Party, had paid a great compliment to the strength & vigour of Communism & the Soviet idea in Britain. The very fact that these bourgeois-minded leaders were afraid to have Communists in their midst showed how rapidly events were developing in England. The fear of the Labour Party for the Communist Party was an indication that the Communists in Britain must strive to band themselves into one solid disciplined organisation. He was very glad indeed that the Communist International had decided to use its fullest powers in order to secure a united Communist movement in Britain. Of course there was a big difference in the attitude of the Communist Party towards the question of Labour Party affiliation as compared with the position of the old B.S.P. While the latter simply applied for formal affiliation the Communist Party correctly insisted upon stating its policy & demanded freedom of action inside the Labour Party. Nevertheless, despite this difference, the Labour Party in turning down the application of the Communist Party had demonstrated that the new organisation had attracted good revolutionary fighters to its ranks.

The next important thing for the British Communists to consider, said Lenin, is their attitude towards the coming General Election. According to various reports Lloyd George may force an election upon the country next November. It is the imperative duty of the Communists to use the next election for purposes of agitation. The Communist Party should put forward as many candidates as possible in order to explain to the masses the hopelessness of capitalism & the futility of the Parliamentary system. It would be impossible to put a great number of candidates in the field, therefore, the British Communists would have to devise some tactical method whereby they could use their opponents as instruments to prove that the Soviet policy was the only one which could adequately tackle & solve the various problems created by modern capitalism. Revolutionary political action consists in using the policy of the enemy especially if their policy is going to end in their own undoing. Parliamentary action not only enables the Communists to carry on magnificent propaganda, it also may be used as a means to press the opposition into a position which demonstrates their futility. Many people in Britain are now beginning to realise that the capitalist & Parliamentary system are bankrupt. They are learning this, not only because of the theoretical arguments of the Marxists & Communists but as a result of the concrete experiences & lessons provided by the Coalition Government since the Armistice. How then can the British Communists accelerate the downfall of the Parliamentary system & expose its fraudulent pretensions to the masses? Certainly not by hurling theoretical arguments at the heads of the workers. The function of our theories is to guide us in our revolutionary activities. The place to test our theories is in the battleground of action. The real test of a Communist is to know where & when to translate his Marxism into action. Since the Communist Party cannot put up a candidate in every constituency, in order to lead an attack upon capitalism & its futile Parliamentary methods of social representation, it must next ask itself whether it can use any of the other political parties to do its work. The Coalition Party, with Lloyd George, Churchill, Bonar Law, & Co., have already demonstrated their futility; they have had their chance & their period of power has created dissatisfaction in the ranks of the masses. The Labour Party is the only political organisation that has, so far, had no opportunity to demonstrate the breakdown of the Parliamentary method. The only difference between Arthur Henderson, Thomas, & their followers, on the one hand, & Lloyd George & Bonar Law on the other hand, is that the former have not yet had an opportunity to wield the Parliamentary machine. In Britain the Communists, placed as they are, ought to help these gentlemen to get their chance to control Parliament. Help the Labour Party to prove that it cannot use Parliament to solve the vital problems confronting society; help it to provide the concrete proof that the Soviet is the historically evolved instrument which alone can supply the wants of the masses. In a word the Communist Party in Britain ought to assist the Labour Party to demonstrate its own futility.

I asked Lenin if he did not think it would tend to confuse the workers of Britain if the Communist Party became officially responsible for assisting the Labour Party in its triumph. I argued that we would be officially identified with an organisation which would precipitate such a crisis, that it might be swept away by the indignant masses. During such a crisis the workers would remember that we had actively assisted the Labour Party & there was every danger that we might also be swept away during the upheaval. Lenin smiled & said that while Britain had produced good Communists who were splendid fighters his opinion of all the British comrades, whom he had met, showed that they lacked political experience. He said that the difficulty which I had raised could be easily overcome by the Communist Party issuing an official manifesto in every constituency, contested by the Labour Party, urging the workers to vote for the Labour Party in order to prove that the Hendersons, Thomases, MacDonalds, & Snowdens, could not solve the manifold problems confronting society through the Parliamentary machine. This method would keep the Communist Party from being embroiled as I had feared. We discussed this tactic for some time. I kept raising objections until Lenin, scenting the possibility of a good polemical duel, challenged me to a friendly discussion on the matter in the English Communist Press. I readily assented to this & asked when he would have his first article ready. He sadly shook his head & pointed to the mountain of important work that lay piled up before him. I thereupon offered to write up his side of the case, as I have done in this article, & submit it to the readers of the *Communist*. He agreed that this would serve his purpose & save his time.

Written in English
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in 1970 in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVII*

Published in English for
the first time

From SPEECH DELIVERED AT A CONFERENCE OF CHAIRMEN OF UYEZD, VOLOST AND VILLAGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES OF MOSCOW GUBERNIA

OCTOBER 15, 1920

For several years Britain's Secretary for War Churchill has been employing every means, both lawful and more often unlawful from the viewpoint of British law, to help the whiteguards against Russia, so as to supply them with military equipment. He hates Soviet Russia bitterly, yet immediately after our declaration Britain fell out with France, because France needs the forces of a whiteguard Russia to protect her against Germany, while Britain needs no such protection. Britain, a naval power, fears no such action because she has a most powerful navy. Thus, the League of Nations, which has sent such unprecedented threats to Russia, was itself helpless from the very outset. At every step the interests of the League's member states are patently in conflict. France desires the defeat of Britain, and vice versa. When Comrade Kamenev was negotiating with the British Government in London and asked the British Prime Minister, "Let us suppose that you will really do what you say, what about France?", the British Prime Minister had to reply that France would go her own way. He said that Britain could not take the same road as France. It became plain that the League of Nations was non-existent, that the alliance of the capitalist powers is sheer fraud, and that in actual fact it is an alliance of robbers, each trying to snatch something from the others. When at the conclusion of peace in Riga[154], we discovered what divided Poland, Britain, France and Wrangel, and why they could not act in unison, we learnt that their interests differed: Britain wanted to have the small succession states—Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—in her sphere of influence and was not interested in the restoration of tsarist or whiteguard or even bourgeois Russia; she even stood to lose from it. That was why Britain was acting counter to France and could not unite with Poland and Wrangel. France's concern was to fight to the last Polish soldier for her interests and the debts owed to her. She hoped we would pay her the 20-thousand-million debt incurred by the former tsar and recognised by the Kerensky government. Any sensible person will realise that the French capitalists will never see the colour of their money; the French capitalists realise that the French workers and peasants cannot be made to fight, while Polish soldiers are plentiful and can be driven into battle—so let them die that the French capitalists may get their millions back. However, the Polish workers too can see that the French, British and other officers behave in Poland just as if they were in a conquered country. That was why, during the Riga negotiations, we saw that the party of the Polish workers and peasants which is undoubtedly patriotic and undoubtedly hostile to Bolshevism, just like our Right-wing Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, stood for peace and was opposed to the government of the Polish landowners and capitalists, who up to the last moment tried to wreck the peace treaty, and even now want to do so and will go on doing so for a long time to come. I shall have to speak on this point when I come to the question of whether the preliminary peace we have just concluded will last.

Pravda No. 232,
October 17, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 323-24

LETTER
TO G. V. CHICHERIN

Comrade Chicherin,

The news from Britain, especially from Krasin (and extracts from the newspapers), and particularly the news that America will at once join (a trade agreement between Russia and Britain), raises the urgent and extremely important issue of a trade agreement with Britain.[155]

If it is a question of peace or war,* it should be tied in with Batum and Georgia.[156]

Then, on the question of debts, we should be *absolutely sure* that we are not made to pay.

If there is a trade agreement *who* will have the right to sign the *final text*? Krasin alone? or the Council of People's Commissars?

This *question* must be urgently worked out *in all its* aspects.

With communist greetings,

19/XI

Lenin

Written on November 19, 1920
First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
p. 54

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* In the original the last three words are in English.—*Ed.*

DRAFT DECISION FOR THE POLITBUREAU OF THE C.C., R.C.P. (B.) ON THE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH BRITAIN[157]

The Politbureau approves the proposal of Comrade Chicherin on the question of the trade agreement with Britain and particularly emphasises:

that Krasin, without the special and explicit consent of the Central Committee, should on no account go beyond the text and letter of our Note of 29.VI on the questions of propaganda and debts;

all details to be dealt with at special talks on a peace treaty.

In motivation, reference to be made to their aid to Wrangel.

Written on December 4, 1920
First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
p. 232

From REPORT ON CONCESSIONS DELIVERED TO THE R.C.P.(B.) GROUP AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

DECEMBER 21, 1920

In Britain the struggle has been going on for a long time. We have gained by the mere fact that among those who represent the worst capitalist exploitation we have people who back the policy of restoring trade relations with Russia. The agreement with Britain—a trade agreement—has not yet been signed. Krasin is now actively negotiating it in London. The British Government has submitted its draft to us and we have presented our counterdraft, but all the same we see that the British Government is dragging out the negotiations and that there is a reactionary military group hard at work there which is hindering the conclusion of trade agreements and has so far been successful. It is our prime interest and prime duty to support anything that can strengthen the parties and groups working for the conclusion of this agreement with us. In Vanderlip we have gained such a supporter, not by mere chance or because Vanderlip is particularly enterprising or knows Siberia very well. The causes here lie much deeper and are linked with the development of the interests of British imperialism, which possesses a huge number of colonies. This rift between American and British imperialism is deep, and it is our imperative duty to base ourselves on it.

The comrade who has asked about the resumption of trade relations with Britain wants to know why the signing of the agreement with that country has been held up. My answer is that it is being delayed because the British Government is hesitant. Most of the trade and industrial bourgeoisie in Britain are in favour of relations being resumed and clearly realise that any action for war means taking enormous risks and speeding up the revolution. You will remember that during our drive on Warsaw the British Government presented us with an ultimatum, threatening to order its navy to sail against Petrograd. You will remember that Councils of Action sprang up all over Britain at the time and the Menshevik leaders of the British working class declared that they were against war and would not permit one. On the other hand, the reactionary section of the British bourgeoisie and the military clique at court are in favour of the war continuing. The delay in signing the trade agreement must undoubtedly be ascribed to their influence. I shall not go into all the details of these trade relations with Britain, or of this agreement on trade relations with Britain, because it would take me too far afield. This delicate problem had recently to be very thoroughly discussed by the Central Committee of the Party. We have returned to it again and again, and our policy in this matter has been marked by the greatest degree of accommodation. Our aim now is to obtain a trade agreement with Britain so as to start more regular trade and be able to buy as soon as possible the machinery necessary for our extensive plan to rehabilitate the national economy. The sooner we do this the greater will be the basis ensuring our economic independence of the capitalist countries. At present, after having burnt their fingers in the armed invasion of Russia, they cannot think of an immediate resumption of the war. We must seize the opportunity and bend every effort to achieve trade relations even at the cost of maximum concessions, for we cannot for a moment believe in lasting trade relations with the imperialist powers; the respite will be temporary. The experience of the history of revolutions and great conflicts teaches us that wars, a series of wars, are inevitable. The existence of a Soviet Republic alongside of capitalist countries—a Soviet Republic surrounded by capitalist countries—is so intolerable to the capitalists that they will seize any opportunity to resume the war. The peoples are weary of the imperialist war and threaten to make their indignation felt if war continues, but the possibility of the capitalists being able to resume it in a few years is not precluded. That is why we must exert every effort to utilise the opportunity, since it exists, and conclude trade agreements. I can say the following here (this is not for the record). I think that we shall ultimately emerge on top as a result of our firm stand that the Communist International is not a governmental institution. That is the more probable for the British bourgeoisie having to realise the ridiculousness of rising up against the Third International. The Third International was formed in March 1919. Its Second Congress was held in July 1920, following which the terms proposed in Moscow were made publicly known in all countries. An open struggle is going on for adhesion to the Communist International. The organisational foundations for the formation of Communist parties exist everywhere. In these circumstances, any attempt to present us seriously with an ultimatum that we get rid of the Communist International is inexcusable. However, the emphasis laid on the matter shows where the shoe pinches and what displeases them in our policy. Even without that, we have known what it is in our policy that is not to their liking. The East is another question that can be spoken of at a Party meeting, and is alarming Britain. The latter wants us to give assurances that we will do nothing against Britain's interests in the East. We are willing and ready to give such an undertaking. As an example I might mention that the Congress of Peoples of the East, a Communist congress, took place, not in the R.S.F.S.R. but in Baku, in the independent republic of Azerbaijan. The British Government will have no reason to accuse us of doing anything against British interests. In their ignorance of our Constitution, they sometimes confuse the Azerbaijan Republic with the Russian Soviet Republic. Our laws are definite and precise on that score, and it will be easy to refute the false interpretations of the British ministers. However, there are still differences on this subject, and Krasin is engaged with the ministers in talks on these two sore points.

In July, when Poland was threatened with utter defeat, and the Red Army was about to crush her, the complete text of an agreement was presented by Britain, which in effect said that we had to declare as a matter of principle that we would not carry on official propaganda or do anything contrary to British interests in the East. That was to be laid down at a subsequent political conference, but at the moment they were concluding a definite trade agreement. They asked whether we would like to sign it. We replied that we would. Today we say again that we will sign such an agreement. The political conference will specify Britain's interests in the East. We also have certain interests in the East, and we shall set them forth in detail when the need arises. Britain cannot say outright that she is abandoning her July proposal and so she is dragging things out and concealing from her own people the truth about the negotiations. The outcome of the negotiations is uncertain and we cannot guarantee that an agreement will be signed. The very powerful court and military circles in Britain are opposed to the agreement. We are, however, proposing maximum concessions, and we believe it to be in our interests to sign a trade pact and purchase with all possible dispatch some of the essentials for the restoration of the railways (i.e., locomotives), for the rehabilitation of industry, and for electrification. This is more important to us than anything else. If we achieve that, we shall become so strong in a few years that even, if the worst comes to the worst and there is armed intervention in a few years' time, it will fail because we shall be stronger than we are now. The line we in the Central Committee are following is one of maximum concessions to Britain. If these gentlemen think they will catch us breaking promises, we declare that our government will not carry on any official propaganda and that we have no intention of infringing on any of Britain's interests in the East. If they hope to derive some advantage from this, let them try; we shall not be the losers.

I now come to the question of the relations between Britain and France. These are confused. On the one hand, Britain and France belong to the League of Nations and are obliged to act jointly; on the other hand, whenever any tension arises they fail to do so. When Comrade Kamenev was in London conducting negotiations together with Krasin, this became quite obvious. France was in favour of supporting Poland and Wrangel, but the British Government declared it would not support France. Concessions are more acceptable to Britain than to France, which still aspires to get her debts paid back, while in Britain capitalists with any business sense no longer think about it. From that angle, too, it is to our advantage to use the dissension between Britain and France, and we must therefore insist on the political proposal of concessions to Britain. We now have a draft agreement on timber concessions in the Far North. Since there is no political unity between Britain and France, our position imposes on us the duty of even incurring a certain risk, if only we succeed in hampering a military alliance between Britain and France against us. A new war that Britain and France will support against us will be an immense burden on us (even if it ends, as the war with Wrangel has done, in our complete victory); it will hinder our economic development and worsen the condition of the workers and peasants. We must therefore be ready to do whatever involves the least loss. Obviously, the losses from concessions are negligible compared with those that would arise from a delay in our economic development and the loss of thousands of workers and peasants that would ensue were we unable to withstand the alliance of the imperialists. Negotiations on concessions with Britain are one of the means of standing up to their alliance. That is the political aspect of the issue.

Published at the end of December
1920 in the pamphlet, V. Lenin,
On Concessions (*Report to the R.C.P. group at the Eighth Congress of Soviets*),
State Publishers, Moscow

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 468-69, 471-75

From REPORT OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON FOREIGN AND HOME POLICY TO THE EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

DECEMBER 22, 1920

I must add that negotiations for the conclusion of a trade agreement with Great Britain are now under way. Unfortunately, these negotiations have been dragging out much longer than we would wish, but we are not at all to blame for that. When, as far back as July—at the moment the Soviet troops were achieving their greatest successes—the British Government officially submitted to us the text of an agreement assuring the establishment of trade relations, we replied by giving our full consent, but since then the conflict of the various trends within the British Government and the British state has held this up. We see how the British Government is vacillating, and is threatening to sever relations with us and immediately to dispatch warships to Petrograd. We have seen all this, but at the same time we have seen that, in reply to this threat, Councils of Action have sprung up all over Great Britain. We have seen how, under pressure from the workers, the most extreme adherents of the opportunist trend and their leaders have been obliged to resort to this quite "unconstitutional" policy, one that they had themselves condemned a short while before. It appears that, despite the Menshevik prejudices which have hitherto prevailed in the British trade union movement, the pressure brought to bear by the working people and their political consciousness have become strong enough to blunt the edge of the imperialists' bellicose policy. Continuing our policy of peace, we have taken our stand on the proposals made by the British Government in July. We are prepared to sign a trade agreement at once;

if it has not yet been signed, the blame rests wholly with those trends and tendencies in British ruling circles that are anxious to frustrate the trade agreement and, against the will of the majority, not only of the workers but even of the British bourgeoisie, want a free hand to attack Soviet Russia again. That is their affair.

The longer this policy is pursued by certain influential circles in Great Britain, by financial and imperialist circles there, the more it will aggravate the financial situation, the longer it will delay the semi-agreement which has now become essential between bourgeois Britain and the Soviet Republic, and the nearer it will bring the imperialists to a situation that will oblige them to accept a full agreement, not merely a semi-agreement.

Published in 1921 in the book *The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Verbatim Report*

Collected Works, Vol. 31, pp. 492-93

From THESES FOR A REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE R.C.P. TO THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

4. THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY IN RUSSIA

This being the internal situation in Russia, the main task now confronting her proletariat, as the ruling class, is properly to determine and carry out the measures that are necessary to lead the peasantry, establish a firm alliance with them and achieve the transition, in a series of gradual stages, to large-scale, socialised, mechanised agriculture. This is a particularly difficult task in Russia, both because of her backwardness, and her extreme state of ruin as a result of seven years of imperialist and civil war. But apart from these specific circumstances, this is one of the most difficult tasks of socialist construction that will confront all capitalist countries, with, perhaps, the sole exception of Britain. However, even in regard to Britain it must not be forgotten that, while the small tenant farmers there constitute only a very small class, the percentage of workers and office employees who enjoy a petty-bourgeois standard of living is exceptionally high, due to the actual enslavement of hundreds of millions of people in Britain's colonial possessions.

Hence, from the standpoint of development of the world proletarian revolution as a single process, the epoch Russia is passing through is significant as a practical test and a verification of the policy of a proletariat in power towards the mass of the petty bourgeoisie.

First published as a pamphlet,
Tezisy doklada o taktike R.K.P. na III kongresse Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala, by the Press Department of the Communist International in 1921, Moscow

Collected Works, Vol. 32, pp. 455-56

TO COMRADE THOMAS BELL

Dear comrade,

I thank you very much for your letter, of August 7. I have read nothing concerning the English movement last months because of my illness and overwork.

It is extremely interesting what you communicate. Perhaps it is the *beginning* of the real proletarian mass movement in Great Britain *in the communist sense*. I am afraid we have till now in England few very feeble propagandist societies for communism (inclusive of the British Communist Party) but no really *mass* communist movement.

If the South Wales Miners' Federation has decided on July 24 to affiliate to the Third International by a majority of 120 to 63—perhaps it is the beginning of a new era. (How many miners are there in England? More than 500,000? How much in South Wales? 25,000? How many miners were *really* represented in Cardiff July 24, 1921?)

If these miners are not too small minority, if they fraternise with soldiers and begin a *real* "class war"—we must do all our possible to *develop* this movement and strengthen it.

Economic measures (like communal kitchens) are good but they are not much important *now*, *before* the victory of the proletarian revolution in England. *Now* the *political* struggle is the most important.

English capitalists are shrewd, clever, astute. They *will support* (directly or indirectly) communal kitchens *in order* to divert the attention *from political aims*.

What is important is (if I am not mistaken):

1) To create a very good, really proletarian, really mass *Communist Party* in this part of England, that is, such party

which will *really* be the *leading* force in *all* labour movement in this part of the country. (Apply the resolution on organisation and work of the Party adopted by the Third Congress[158] to this part of your country.)

2) To start a daily paper of the working class, for the working class in this part of the country.

To start it not as a business (as usually newspapers are started in capitalist countries), not with big sum of money, not in ordinary and usual manner—but as an *economic and political* tool of the *masses* in their struggle.

Either the miners of this district are capable to pay *halfpenny* daily (for the beginning *weekly*, if you like) for their *own* daily (or weekly) newspaper (be it very small, it is not important)—*or there is no beginning of really communist mass movement in this part of your country.*

If the Communist Party of this district cannot collect a few pounds in order to publish *small leaflets* daily as a beginning of the really *proletarian* communist newspaper—if it is so, if *every* miner will not pay a penny for it, then there is *not serious*, not genuine affiliation to the Third International.

English Government will apply the shrewdest means in order to suppress every beginning of this kind. Therefore we must be (in the beginning) very prudent. The paper must be *not too revolutionary* in the beginning. If you will have three editors, at least one must be *non-communist*. (At least two genuine workers.) If nine-tenths of the workers do not buy this paper, if two-thirds $\left(\frac{120}{120+63}\right)$ do not pay special contributions (f. 1 penny *weekly*) for *their* paper—it will be no workers' newspaper.

I should be very glad to have few lines from you concerning this theme and beg to apologise for my bad English.

With communist greetings,

Lenin

Written on August 13, 1921
First published in the *Workers' Weekly* No. 205, January 21, 1927
The Russian translation appeared in *Pravda* No. 21, January 27, 1927

Collected Works, Vol. 32, pp. 510-11

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY POLICY

(To Comrade Chicherin, a Copy to Comrade Radek and All Members of the Political Bureau)

The telegram about the British Labour Party shows how extraordinarily naïve Krasin is. As I see it, measures of two kinds should now be taken: 1) a series of articles signed by various people and ridiculing the views of so-called European democracy on the Georgian problem should be published in the press; 2) some caustic journalist should be immediately commissioned to draft for Chicherin a super-polite Note in reply to the British Labour Party. In this Note he should make it perfectly plain that the proposal that we withdraw our troops from Georgia and hold a referendum there would be quite reasonable and might be recognised as coming from people who have not gone out of their minds, and have not been bribed by the Entente, if it extended to all nations of the globe; specifically, in order to set the British Labour Party leaders thinking about the meaning of present-day imperialist relations in international politics, we suggest, in particular, that that party give favourable consideration to the following: first, that British troops be withdrawn from Ireland and that a referendum be held there; second, the same with regard to India; third, the same with regard to the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Korea; fourth, the same with regard to all countries in which there are troops of any of the big imperialist states. The Note should express, in superbly polite terms, the idea that people desirous of giving thought to these proposals of ours and to the system of imperialist relations in international politics may prove capable of understanding the "interesting" nature of the proposals made by us to the British Labour Party. On the whole, the draft Note, couched in super-polite and extremely popular terms (to suit the intelligence of ten-year-olds), should deride the idiotic leaders of the British Labour Party.

I propose that the Political Bureau consider whether it ought to send a copy of this letter to Krasin. I personally am in favour.

Lenin

Dictated over the telephone on December 27, 1921
First published in *Pravda* No. 21, January 21, 1930

Collected Works, Vol. 33, pp. 182-83

NOTE TO M. M. LITVINOV WITH A DRAFT REPLY TO F. R. MACDONALD[159]

To Comrade *Litvinov* (or Comrade *Chicherin*)

Please look over my reply and have it translated into exquisitely polite English (make the minor alterations yourself; the major ones we can discuss over the telephone). Knock it out on the typewriter, using my letterhead, and send it to me for signing.

Dear Mr. MacDonald!

Thank you very much indeed for your kind letter and your appreciation. very flattering to me, of the reception you were given. I have heard from Comrade Krasin an extremely favourable account of your outstanding role and outstanding abilities in matters of industry and commerce. I am all the more appreciative, on our behalf, of your practical proposal in this field. I deeply regret that illness prevents me from receiving you, the doctors have even forbidden me all conversation. I shall consider it my bounden duty to write a letter to Comrades Chicherin and Lezhava, asking them to give the matter their special attention and appoint the best experts for the prompt, business-like and authoritative examination of your practical suggestions, which are highly important and of profound interest to us.

I hope you will be so kind as to excuse my delay in replying due to illness, and beg you to accept these assurances of the deepest respect from your obedient servant.

2/II-22

First published in 1959 in
Lenin Miscellany XXXVI

Published in English for
the first time

LETTER
TO G. V. CHICHERIN

February 15, 1922

Comrade Chicherin:

A telegram from Krasin dated 13.II (File No. 1466/c) says (Lloyd George): "If the Soviet Government refuses to recognise the Cannes resolutions that will *threaten* the breakdown of the entire conference and will, *in any case*, make it easier for Poincaré to walk out...."

That is formulated more "threateningly" than accurately!

But the whole British press, judging by our papers, has made frequent statements to the effect that the invitation to the Genoa Conference *does not require* and *never has required the preliminary* acceptance of the Cannes terms and that the contrary opinion held by the French is an incorrect one.

All the material must be collected to establish *precise* and *formally* indisputable facts.

It seemed to me that three facts were indisputable:

(1) when we were invited it was *not* required that we make a precise, clear and formal declaration of *acceptance* of the Cannes terms;

(2) we did *not* make any such declaration in our reply, and we have *not been informed* that our reply is *incomplete*;

(3) *the entire* British bourgeois press in its dispute with the French *recognised* that the preliminary acceptance of the Cannes terms is not obligatory.

With communist greetings,

Lenin

First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
pp. 469-70

LETTER TO G. V. CHICHERIN

(Copy to Comrade Kamenev)

Comrade Chicherin,

I can't send an article. Please don't count on me at all. It's essential to make sure well in advance that we have a very responsible and very intelligent editor for everything we place with the English newspapers. I'm very much afraid that if we don't appoint such an editor, we shall get nothing but trash in *The Manchester Guardian*, and this will only be damaging to us. At a time like this, when there is a growing likelihood of the French disrupting Genoa, our articles must be made into fighting speeches, i.e., an absolutely clear-cut plan for restoring Russia on a non-capitalist basis, and also a scathing indictment of the European states for utter helplessness, muddle, and stupidity.[160]

Lenin

Dictated over the telephone
on March 8, 1922
First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Published in English for
the first time

LETTER TO J. V. STALIN FOR MEMBERS OF THE POLITBUREAU OF THE R.C.P.(B.) C.C. ON REJECTING THE AGREEMENT WITH LESLIE URQUHART[161]

September 12, 1922

Comrade Stalin,

Having read Krasin's agreement with Urquhart, I express my objection to its approval. While promising earnings for us within two or three years, Urquhart is taking our money just now. This is absolutely inadmissible. Mikhailov, chairman of the commission, who had made a special on-the-spot study of the Urquhart concession, has proved that it is not we *but the foreigners* who are guilty of the destruction. And after this it is we who have to pay!! We shall allegedly obtain relief within *X* years, but we ourselves have to start paying right away!

I propose that this concession be *rejected.*

This is bondage and plunder.

I remind you of the conclusion of the Mikhailov commission. It was against the concession.

Not a single serious argument has been added. It should be rejected.

I ask you to communicate this to the Politbureau members.

With communist greetings,

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

P.S. It is a ruse to say that this concession will not be a precedent.

It *is* bound to be and *is* sure to be a precedent. That is how it is sure *actually* to shape out regardless of all the talk and assurances.

And in general, absolutely no account has been taken of *everything* uncovered by the Mikhailov commission. There are *a number* of arguments against such a concession.

Lenin

First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
pp. 565-66

From INTERVIEW GIVEN TO MICHAEL FARBMAN, *OBSERVER* AND *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* CORRESPONDENT

1. *Question.* The anti-Russian press describes Herriot's reception in Moscow and the Franco-Russian negotiations[162] as a definite change in Soviet Russia's foreign policy.

Is that true? Is it true that Russia regards British policy in the Middle East as a challenge and is ready to conclude an agreement with France directed against Britain?

Answer. I consider it absolutely incorrect to describe Herriot's reception in Moscow and the Franco-Russian negotiations as a change, even a slight one, in Soviet Russia's policy in general, or as being anti-British in particular. We certainly value very highly both Herriot's reception in Moscow and the step taken towards a rapprochement with France or towards negotiations with her, which have now become possible, probable and, I should like to believe, essential. Any rapprochement with France is something we very much desire, especially in view of the fact that Russia's commercial interests imperatively demand closer relations with this strong continental power. But we are convinced that this rapprochement does not in the least imply that some change must necessarily take place in our policy towards Britain. We believe fully friendly relations with both powers to be quite possible, and that is our aim. We believe that the development of commercial relations will inevitably go a very long way towards achieving this aim. We believe that the interests of Britain and France, rightly understood, will likewise operate in that direction. We believe that the mutual interests of both Britain and France, insofar as they have points of contact with Russia, do not under any circumstances contain elements of inevitable hostility between Britain and France. On the contrary, we even think that peaceful and friendly relations between these powers and Russia are a guarantee (I am almost prepared to say—the strongest guarantee) that peace and friendship between Britain and France will last a long time, and that all possible, and under present circumstances probable, differences between France and Britain will most speedily and truly find a happy solution.

2. *Question.* Is not the virtual termination of the Greco-Turkish War, a war supported by Britain, an opportune moment for the conclusion of an Anglo-Russian agreement?

Answer. Of course, the termination of the Greco-Turkish War, which had Britain's support, is a factor that, to a certain extent, improves the chances of an Anglo-Russian agreement being concluded. We looked for such an agreement even before that war ended and shall now continue to seek it with the utmost energy. True, some of the problems connected with the termination of that war are objects of our disagreement with Britain. But, first of all, the peace which has followed the Greco-Turkish War is in our opinion such an advantage to international politics as a whole that we hope for an improvement in the general conditions under which they are conducted, thanks to the Greco-Turkish peace. Secondly, we do not consider the differences between Britain and ourselves to be in any way insurmountable. On the contrary, we expect that, with the Middle East problem entering various stages, the near future will show us to what extent we are right in hoping that the end of the Greco-Turkish War will also be the end of the conflicts and differences which placed that war in the forefront of international politics. We are doing everything in our power to make the end of that war also the end of all friction and disagreement with Britain, and we hope that the interests of the British Government will rise on this occasion, too, above any promptings and the frequently insincere utterances of the anti-Russian press.

6. *Question.* Does the refusal to ratify the agreement with Urquhart mean a victory of the "Left Communists"? What are the objective conditions which would make possible a resumption of negotiations and the ratification of the agreement with Urquhart?[163]

Answer. The question of concluding an agreement with Urquhart was raised by our government when I was ill and was unable to take part in affairs of state. Therefore I am not yet fully informed of all the details of this matter. Nevertheless I can assert quite definitely that there is not, nor can there now be, any question of a victory for the Left Communists. I know this from my direct observation of the course of government affairs.

The fact of the matter is that Britain's act of injustice, expressed in her unwillingness to admit us to the Conference,[164] was so unexpected, aroused such indignation in Russia and so firmly united not only the Right with the Left Communists but also united the huge mass of the non-Party population of Russia, the workers and peasants, that things did not and could not reach the point of disagreement between the Left and Right Communists.

The reason given for our rejection of the Urquhart agreement was a direct expression, one may say, not only of the general Party sentiment but of that of the entire people, i.e., the sentiment of the entire mass of the workers and peasants.

The resumption of negotiations and the subsequent ratification of an agreement with Urquhart depend primarily on the elimination of the flagrant injustices committed against Russia by Britain in curtailing her right to participate in the Middle East Conference. As far as the concrete terms submitted to us by Urquhart are concerned, I have not yet had time to look into this matter in sufficient detail, and can only say that the government has decided to let the supporters and opponents of this agreement have their say in our press as soon as possible, in order to obtain, from the most objective and motivated discussion, material for the overall verification of all the pros and cons and for a decision on the issue in a manner that best accords with Russia's interests.

7. *Question.* To what extent are the accusations of the anti-Russian press in Britain justified when they assert that the recent arrests of industrialists in Moscow signify the end of the New Economic Policy and a reversion to the policy of nationalisation and confiscation?

Answer. As to your question concerning the accusations made against us in the British anti-Russian press that "Moscow industrialists" were being arrested, I must say that I have today just read in our newspaper (*Izvestia*) an item headed "Arrests of Black Marketeers". None other than Comrade Z. B. Katsnelson, chief of the Economic Division of the

State Political Administration, tells us in this article that there was no question of arrests of industrialists, and that "rumours circulated by enemies of Soviet power, both within the R.S.F.S.R. and abroad, that the arrests are infringements on the freedom to trade are actually nothing but *nonsensical* inventions that have the definite counter-revolutionary intent of disrupting the economic relations that are being established with Western Europe".

Indeed, those arrested were exclusively profiteers on the so-called black market and our authorities are in possession of evidence establishing connection between these black-market currency profiteers and certain employees of foreign missions in Moscow. This evidence shows not only the sale of platinum and of gold bars but also the *organisation of contraband shipments of these valuables abroad.*

From this you can see how absolutely unfounded are the rumours that we are putting an end to the New Economic Policy and how utterly false are the accusations made by the anti-Russian press in Britain, which is trying by the most unheard-of distortion and deception to present our policy in a false light. Actually, there has never been any mention in any government circles whatsoever of discontinuing the New Economic Policy and returning to the old. Incidentally, the whole work of the government during the session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee now in progress is aimed at obtaining the widest possible legislative sanction for what is known as the New Economic Policy, so as to eliminate all possibility of any deviation from it.

October 27, 1922

Pravda No. 254,
November 10, 1922

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 383-84, 387-89

NOTES

[1] *A Characterisation of Economic Romanticism*—one of V. I. Lenin's early works, written in 1897. Here he analyses in detail the teachings of the Swiss economist Sismondi and shows that the latter's views express the ideology of the petty bourgeois who dreams of a return to the mediaeval way of life and criticises capitalism from a reactionary standpoint. Not forward, from capitalism to large-scale, collective socialist production, but backward, to the small-scale production of isolated individual proprietors—such is the reactionary essence of Sismondi's "economic romanticism". Lenin shows that the views of the Russian Narodniks coincide with those of Sismondi and represent "only a Russian variety of European romanticism". p. 11

[2] The term "scientific theory" or "modern theory" is used here in place of Marxism. p. 11

[3] *The Corn Laws*—the high tariffs on corn imports passed by the English Parliament in 1815 in the interests of the landlords. The Corn Laws prohibited the import of corn when the price on the English market was below 80 s. per quarter. A heavy burden on the poorer strata of the population, the Corn Laws were also unprofitable to the industrial bourgeoisie, since they raised the cost of labour power, reduced the capacity of the home market and hindered the development of foreign trade. At the close of the 1830s the English bourgeoisie formed the Anti-Corn Law League, headed by Cobden and Bright. For several years the League fought for the repeal of the Corn Laws, which was effected in 1846. p. 11

[4] The English translation of Marx's speech on free trade is given as an appendix in *The Poverty of Philosophy* by Karl Marx, Moscow, 1966, pp. 180-95. p. 16

[5] These are the opening words of Marx's speech on free trade. p. 17

[6] Frederick Engels is the author of this work, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*. See Marx and Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 1-336. The sentence given is on page 304. p. 17

[7] Reference is to *The German Ideology* written by Marx and Engels in 1845-46 and first published in full in 1932 by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. Part of this work was published in 1847 in the shape of articles by Marx in the monthly *Westphälisches Dampfboot*; in 1899 they were reprinted in *Die Neue Zeit*, organ of the German Social-Democratic Party. p. 18

[8] Lenin is quoting Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I. See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1965, pp. 677-78. p. 19

[9] Because of the censorship V. I. Lenin either substituted or omitted certain words from this quotation. Thus, for example, he translated "hastens social revolution" as "hastens this break-up", and "in this revolutionary sense alone" as "in this sense alone". p. 23

[10] Reference is to Kautsky's *The Agrarian Question*, published in Stuttgart in 1899, and to the article by the Russian "legal Marxist" Bulgakov entitled "A Contribution to the Question of the Capitalist Evolution of Agriculture" that appeared in issue No. 1-2 of the magazine *Nachalo* (Beginning), published in St. Petersburg in 1899. p. 29

[11] In his article "On Co-operation" (1923) Lenin wrote of Robert Owen's co-operative plans as follows:

"Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamed of peacefully remodelling contemporary society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental questions as the class struggle, the capture of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this 'co-operative' socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organising the population in co-operative societies.

"Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for socialism cannot be established without a class struggle for political power in the state." p. 30

[12] *A. N. Engelhardt* and *Gleb Uspensky*—Russian writers who described the life of the peasants in Russia following the abolition of serfdom in 1861. p. 30

[13] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 169-70, 220, 274-75. p. 31

[14] *Proudhonism*—the teaching of the French petty-bourgeois Socialist and anarchist, Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865). In 1840 Proudhon published his book *Qu'est-ce que la Propriété*? (What Is Property?), in which he criticised modern society and answered the title's question with the statement that "property is theft". At the same time, he stood for maintaining capitalism and its basis, commodity production, imagining that it is possible to "improve" capitalism and purge it of its shortcomings by means of reforms. His ideal was a society of small commodity producers where anarchy prevails.

Karl Marx in his *Poverty of Philosophy* sharply criticised Proudhon's theory and demonstrated the reactionary nature of his plans for "improving" capitalism. Marx showed that Proudhon's main mistake lay in his failure to understand that poverty, inequality, the exploitation of man by man, crises and unemployment are the products of the capitalist mode of production itself and that, consequently, these evils can only be removed by abolishing capitalist relations of production, by turning the means of production into public property, and passing to socialism.

Proudhon and his followers also adopted a wrong attitude towards the national question. They opposed the national liberation movement of oppressed nations, asserting that "nationality" and "nation" are "outmoded prejudices". p. 34

[15] See Frederick Engels, Preface to *The Peasant War in Germany* (*Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, pp. 170-71). p. 35

[16] *The Exceptional Law Against the Socialists* was introduced in Germany by the Bismarck government in 1878. It banned the Social-Democratic Party, all mass labour organisations and the labour press. The best elements in the German Social-Democratic Party, led by August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, conducted extensive illegal activity, with the result that the Party's influence, far from declining, actually grew. In the elections to the Reichstag in 1890 the Social-Democrats polled nearly 1,500,000 votes. The government was forced to repeal the law that same year. p. 35

[17] *Martynov*—an adherent of Economism, an opportunist trend in the Social-Democratic movement in Russia at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The Economists held that the political struggle against tsarism should be conducted mainly by the liberal bourgeoisie, the workers confining themselves to the struggle for such economic demands as better working conditions, higher wages, etc. They denied the leading role of the workers' party and the importance of revolutionary theory in the working-class movement, maintaining that this movement must develop in a spontaneous manner. In his book *What Is To Be Done?* published in 1902, and in other works, Lenin showed that the views of the Economists were totally unfounded and harmful. p. 35

[18] *Iskra* (The Spark)—the first all-Russia illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by Lenin abroad in December 1900 and secretly transported into Russia. It played a tremendous part in uniting the Russian Social-Democrats ideologically and in preparing the ground for merging the scattered local organisations into a revolutionary Marxist party. p. 36

[19] V. I. Lenin is referring to the following passage from his work, *What Is To Be Done*?:

"Those who have the slightest acquaintance with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of theoretical training joined the movement because of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can judge from that how tactless *Rabocheye Dyelo* is when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: 'Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes.' To repeat these words in a period of theoretical disorder is like wishing mourners at a funeral many happy returns of the day. Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme, in which he *sharply condemns* eclecticism in the formulation of principles. If you must unite, Marx wrote to the party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not allow any bargaining over principles, do not make theoretical 'concessions'. This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who seek—in his name—to belittle the significance of theory!

"Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity." p. 36

20 This letter, and the one following, addressed by Vl. Oulianoff (V. I. Lenin) to the Secretary of the Labour Representation Committee in Britain, were written in the following circumstances. In 1904, in connection with the strikes in Russia, Russian Social-Democrats in London formed the Russian Strikers' Aid Committee which sent out to British trade unions an appeal for assistance to the strikers. An appeal of this kind was sent to the Labour Representation Committee, of which J. Ramsay MacDonald was secretary. Negotiations with the Committee were conducted by K. M. Takhtarev and N. A. Alexeyev, who were members of the Russian Social-Democratic organisation in London. The Labour Representation Committee responded to the appeal and requested that a part of the collected funds should be distributed among the wives and children of workers who perished on "Bloody Sunday", January 9 (22), 1905. p. 40

21 On October 31 (18), 1905, the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary* No. 23 published an unsigned article "The British Labour Movement and the Trade Union Congress". Lenin edited the manuscript of the translation and added two notes: one concerning the Taff Vale decision, and the other about the concluding part of the article. p. 42

22 *The Social-Democratic Federation* was founded in 1884 by a group of British Socialists. It was headed by Hyndman, Harry Quelch and Tom Mann. An organisation with an extremely small membership, it was not always consistent, though it conducted propaganda among the workers in the Marxist spirit. In 1908 it was renamed the Social-Democratic Party, which in 1911 merged with other socialist organisations to form the British Socialist Party. p. 45

23 Lenin is quoting Engels's letter to Sorge dated November 29, 1886. An English translation of this letter, as of most of the other letters of Marx and Engels quoted further in the text, may be found in Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965; *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962; and *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1958. p. 45

24 The idea of a "labour congress" and a "broad labour party" was put forward by the liquidators—an opportunist trend that spread among the Mensheviks after the defeat of the 1905-07 revolution. Larin was a leader of the liquidators.

The liquidators were so called because they demanded the liquidation of the revolutionary illegal party of the working class. They appealed to the workers to abandon the revolutionary struggle against tsarism, and intended to establish a "broad" opportunist, petty-bourgeois party, on the lines of the British Labour Party, with a supreme body in the shape of a "labour congress", in which Social-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists would participate. This party, as the liquidators viewed it, was to abandon revolutionary slogans and engage only in legal activity permitted by the tsarist government. Lenin exposed this very harmful attempt of the Mensheviks to liquidate the Social-Democratic Labour Party and to dissolve the vanguard of the working class in the petty-bourgeois mass. The liquidators' policy was not supported by the workers. The Prague Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. in January 1912 expelled the liquidators from the Party. p. 45

25 *The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor*—an American working-class organisation founded in Philadelphia in 1869. Existing illegally until 1878 it observed a semi-mystic ritual. That year the organisation emerged from underground but retained some of its methods of secrecy. The Knights of Labor aimed at the liberation of the workers by means of co-operatives. Membership was open to both skilled and unskilled workers, without discrimination as to sex, race, nationality or religion. The organisation's activity reached its apex during the 1880s, when, under the pressure of the masses, the leaders of the Order were compelled to agree to participate in an extensive strike movement. Its membership at that time was over 700,000, including 60,000 Negroes. However, on account of the opportunist line of the leaders, who were opposed to revolutionary class struggle, the Order gradually lost its prestige among the masses, and its activity came to a halt towards the close of the 1890s. p. 46

26 *Lassalleans*—members of the General Association of German Workers, founded in 1863 by the well-known German Socialist, Ferdinand Lassalle. The formation of a mass workers' political party was undoubtedly a step forward in developing the working-class movement in Germany. Lassalle and his followers, however, pursued an opportunist line on major theoretical and political questions. They considered it possible to use the Prussian state in order to solve the social problem and hoped to do so by setting up producers' co-operatives with the aid of that state. They tried to engage in negotiations with Bismarck, head of the Prussian Government. Marx and Engels severely and rightly criticised the Lassalleans, pointing out that "over the course of several years they were a hindrance to the organisation of the proletariat and ended up by becoming no more than tools of the police".

The advance of the labour movement and increased government persecution led to the General Association of German Workers uniting with the Marxist Social-Democratic Labour Party of

Germany founded by Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel. This took place at the Gotha Congress in 1875, when the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany was formed. The Lassalleans constituted the opportunist trend in the new party. p. 47

27 Reference is to *The History of German Social-Democracy* by F. Mehring. p. 48

28 Lenin quotes here Marx's letter to Sorge dated September 19, 1879. p. 49

29 *Bernsteinism*—an anti-Marxist trend in international Social-Democracy that arose in Germany at the close of the 19th century; it derived its name from the German opportunist Social-Democrat, Eduard Bernstein. After the death of Engels, Bernstein openly professed views that constituted a revision of Marx's revolutionary teaching in the spirit of bourgeois liberalism (see his articles "Problems of Socialism" and his book *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*), and tried to turn the Social-Democratic Party into a petty-bourgeois party of social reform. p. 50

30 This refers to disagreements in the Social-Democratic group of the German Reichstag on the question of a steamship subsidy. At the close of 1884 Reichschancellor Bismarck demanded, in the interests of the German policy of colonial expansion, that the Reichstag approve a subsidy to private firms for establishing steamship lines to East Asia, Australia, and Africa. When the question was discussed in the Reichstag, the Right wing of the Social-Democratic group voted for establishing the East-Asian and Australian lines, and made the iragreement to the establishment of the African and other lines conditional on the new vessels being built at German shipyards. The Reichstag rejected this proposal, and only then did the whole group vote against the subsidies altogether.

In his letter to Sorge, dated December 31, 1884, Engels condemned the opportunist position of the Right wing of the Social-Democratic group. p. 50

31 *Possibilists*—adherents of the petty-bourgeois trend which originated in the French working-class movement in the 1880s. Their leaders were B. Malon and P. Brousse. The Possibilists were opposed to the revolutionary party of the proletariat; they called on the workers not to wage a revolutionary struggle and considered that only with the aid of the municipal councils was the transition, a gradual one, to socialism possible. It was because of their opportunism in practice, their "possibilité" policy, that Guesde ironically called them "Possibilists". At the end of the 1880s they tried, with the help of opportunist elements in other countries, in particular with the help of Hyndman (of the British S.D.F.), to gain the leadership of the international working-class movement. Most of the socialist organisations in the different countries, however, refused to follow the lead of the Possibilists and participated in the Marxists' Congress that took place in Paris from July 14 to 20, 1889. This Congress marked the beginning of the existence of the Second International. p. 50

32 *Bakuninists*—supporters of the anarchist Bakunin. After joining the International Working Men's Association (the First Inter-

national), founded in 1864 by Marx, Bakunin tried to disorganise the international working-class movement by carrying on a bitter struggle against Marxism and by setting up his own anarchist Alliance within the First International. By decision of the Hague Congress (1872) Bakunin and his followers were expelled from the First International. p. 51

[33] *Revolutionary syndicalism*—a petty-bourgeois, semi-anarchist trend that made its appearance in the working-class movement of a number of West-European countries at the close of the 19th century. The syndicalists saw no need for the working class to engage in political struggle, they repudiated the leading role of the Party in the working-class movement and the dictatorship of the proletariat; they believed that by organising a general strike the trade unions (in France—syndicates) could, without a revolution, overthrow capitalism and take over control of production. "Syndicalism", wrote Lenin in 1917, "either repudiates the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, or else relegates it, as it does political power in general, to a back seat. We, however, put it in the fore." Lenin pointed out that "revolutionary syndicalism in many countries was a direct and inevitable result of opportunism, reformism, and parliamentary cretinism". p. 54

[34] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 27. p. 55

[35] *Cadets*—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the principal party of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia, founded in October 1905. The Cadets called themselves the party of "people's freedom". In fact, however, they tried to do a deal with the autocracy, their aim being to retain tsarism in the shape of a constitutional monarchy.

During the First World War of 1914-18 they demanded "war to a victorious finish". After the February 1917 revolution they entered into a deal with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Petrograd Soviet and as a result came to occupy a leading position in the bourgeois Provisional Government, where they pursued a counter-revolutionary policy directed against the people. Following the Great October Socialist Revolution they played the part of agents and hirelings of foreign imperialism, and actively participated in organising Russia's counter-revolutionary forces. Lenin called the Cadet Party the all-Russia headquarters of the counter-revolution. p. 55

[36] *Decazeville strike*—a strike of French miners in Decazeville in January 1886, which was suppressed by government troops. Bourgeois representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, including Radicals, came out in support of the government's repressive measures against the strikers. As a result, the workers' deputies left the Radicals and formed an independent workers' group. p. 56

[37] *The Duma*—a representative body in tsarist Russia. Formally it was a legislative body, but actually it had no real power. Elections to the Duma were neither direct, equal, nor general. The electoral rights of the working classes, and also of the non-Russian nationalities that inhabited Russia, were considerably restricted.

Enormous numbers of workers and peasants were not entitled to vote at all. The bulk of the Duma deputies were landlords or capitalists. p. 58

[38] The Stuttgart Congress resolutions are not given in this book. p. 60

[39] *The Stockholm Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*—the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which took place in April-May 1906 in Stockholm. The Congress discussed a review of the agrarian programme, the current situation, the trade unions, etc. As a result of the fact that after the armed uprising in Moscow in December 1905 the Bolsheviks were subjected to severe persecution and many Bolshevik organisations could not be represented at the Congress, the Mensheviks proved to be in a majority (true, a small one). This explains why the Congress adopted Menshevik resolutions on several items, including those relating to the trade unions and to the agrarian programme. p. 63

[40] *Socialist-Revolutionaries* (*S.R.s*)—a petty-bourgeois party in Russia, which arose at the end of 1901 and the beginning of 1902 as a result of the amalgamation of various Narodnik circles and groups. The programme adopted at the Tirst Congress of this Party held in 1905 constituted a mixture of the ideas of the old Narodism and of Marxism falsified in revisionist fashion. The S.R.s did not see the class differences between the proletarian and the small proprietor; they glossed over the class contradictions within the peasantry and repudiated the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution and the idea of proletarian dictatorship. A watchword for the peasant movement advanced by the S.R.s was the utopian demand for the "socialisation of the land" under capitalism through the abolition of private ownership of the land and its transfer to the village communes on the basis of the "labour principle" and equalitarian land tenure (i.e., as much land to be given to each peasant household as it could farm without employing hired labour). The S.R.s preached the subjectivist idea of active "heroes" and the passive "crowd", and regarded tactics of individual terrorism as their main method of struggle against tsarism. They thereby did great harm to the mass revolutionary movement. During the revolution of 1905-07, the position of the S.R.s was that of bourgeois democrats. The Right-wing S.R.s set up a semi-Cadet Trudovik Popular Socialist Party and established a bloc with the Cadets in 1906. During the First World War the S.R.s pursued a social-chauvinist policy. After the victory of the February 1917 revolution, three groups emerged in their Party, namely, the Right wing, headed by Y. Breshko-Breshkovskaya and Kerensky, the Centrists, headed by V. Chernov, and the Left wing, headed by M. Spiridonova. Right-wing and Centrist leaders became members of the bourgeois Provisional Government, in which capacity they supported the Cadet policy and took part in organising the Kornilov revolt aimed at establishing a military-monarchist dictatorship in Russia. The Left wing, headed by Spiridonova, founded an independent party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in December 1917. Following the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the S.R.s engaged in counter-revolutionary

subversive activities, supporting the interventionists and collaborating with the whiteguard governments, which were the agents of the foreign imperialists. When the intervention was defeated, the S.R.s continued their hostile activities against the Soviet state both within the country and among whiteguard émigrés abroad. In an attempt to retain influence over the peasant masses, the Left S.R.s entered the first Soviet Government in November 1917, but following the ratification of the Brest Peace Treaty, withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars. In the summer of 1918 they organised a revolt aimed at provoking war between Soviet Russia and Germany and overthrowing the Soviet Government. After the suppression of the revolt the Party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries began to disintegrate. p. 63

[41] *The London Congress*—the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in London between April 30 and May 19 (May 13 and June 1), 1907. The Congress discussed the following items: attitude to the bourgeois parties; the "labour congress" and the non-Party workers' organisations; the trade unions and the Party, and other points. The Bolsheviks were in a majority at the Congress, which adopted Bolshevik resolutions on all the important items of principle. The resolution on the trade unions contained the following passage: "The Congress reminds the Party cells and Social-Democrats active in the trade unions, of one of the prime tasks of Social-Democratic activity in them, namely, that of promoting the acceptance of the Social-Democratic Party's ideological leadership by the trade unions, and also of establishing organisational ties with it, and of the need, where local conditions permit, to put this into effect." p. 63

[42] Reference is to the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held on April 10-25 (April 23-May 8), 1906 in Stockholm. p. 67

[43] See Engels's letter to Sorge dated January 18, 1893. p. 67

[44] See Frederick Engels, *The Housing Question*, Moscow, 1970, p. 64. p. 68

[45] The resolution of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. on trade unions appeared in the *Proletary* No. 21, of February 13 (26), 1908.

Party members were instructed to set up Party groups within trade union organisations and to work in them under the direction of the local Party committees. Where police persecution rendered it impossible to organise trade unions or to re-establish those that had been disbanded, the C.C. proposed that trade unions and Party groups within them be organised illegally. p. 72

[46] Reference is to the Seventh Congress of the Second International held August 18-24, 1907, in Stuttgart. For details regarding the Congress see pages 60-66 of this book. p. 72

[47] *Justice*—a weekly founded in London in 1884 as the central organ of the Social-Democratic Federation. In 1911 it became the organ of the British Socialist Party. When the social-jingoist minority left the B.S.P. in 1916, *Justice* became their organ and continued to be published until 1925. *The Call* became the official organ of the B.S.P. 80

[48] *The Labour Leader*—a weekly paper founded in 1890. In 1893 it became the organ of the Independent Labour Party. In 1922 its name was changed to *The New Leader*, which in 1946 became *The Socialist Leader*. p. 80

[49] *The Independent Labour Party* (*I.L.P.*)—a reformist organisation founded in 1893 by the leaders of the "new trade unions", including James Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. While claiming that the I.L.P. was politically independent of the bourgeois parties, the I.L.P. leaders actually pursued a policy of liberalism in the working-class movement. On the outbreak of the First World War of 1914-18 the I.L.P. issued an anti-war manifesto (August 13, 1914). However, in February 1915 the I.L.P. delegates to the Conference of Socialists of the Entente countries held in London supported the social-chauvinist resolution adopted at the Conference. From then on the I.L.P. leaders used pacifist phrases to cover up what was in fact a social-chauvinist position. When the Comintern was founded in 1919, the I.L.P. yielded to the pressure of the masses and withdrew from the Second International. In 1921 the I.L.P. joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International, but when the latter collapsed, returned to the Second International. In March 1921 the Left wing of the I.L.P. broke away from the Party and joined the newly formed Communist Party of Great Britain. In 1931 the I.L.P. leaders MacDonald and Snowden left the Party after they entered the "National" (Conservative) Government. p. 80

[50] Reference is to *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907* by V. I. Lenin (see *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, pp. 242-76). p. 82

[51] At the close of 1905 a revolution broke out in Persia. The urban poor, the workers, the progressive section of the bourgeoisie and other strata of the population rose against the Shah's despotic government, which had reduced the people to utter destitution and subordinated the country to foreign imperialists. As a result of the growing revolutionary movement the Shah was compelled in 1906 to grant a constitution and to convene a Mejlis (Parliament).

In August 1907 the Russian tsarist government concluded an agreement with the British Government for the division of Persia into the Russian and British zones of influence. In June 1908 a counter-revolutionary coup was perpetrated by the Russian Cossack brigade stationed in Teheran, under the command of Col. Lyakhov, who operated in collusion with the Shah. The Mejlis building was subjected to artillery bombardment, some of the deputies were brutally done to death. Lyakhov was appointed military governor of Teheran.

However, the popular struggle continued. Revolutionary detachments captured Tabriz and Resht, and in July 1909 entered Teheran, defeated Lyakhov's Cossacks and deposed Shah Mohammed Ali. State power, however, passed into the hands of the Persian big bourgeoisie and landlords, who wanted to crush the revolution.

Towards the end of 1911 Russian troops occupied Azerbaijan, Gilan and Khorosan and British troops landed in Southern Persia. The revolutionary masses were savagely suppressed, the gains of the revolution wiped out and the rule of the Shah and the feudal lords re-established. p. 85

52 *The Black Hundreds*—monarchist gangs organised by the tsarist police to fight the Russian revolutionary movement. They assassinated revolutionaries, attacked progressive intellectuals and organised anti-Jewish pogroms. p. 85

53 Reference is to the revolution headed by the Young Turks, members of the Unity and Progress Party, that broke out in July 1908. The Unity and Progress Party, which represented the interests of the rising Turkish bourgeoisie, fought the despotic rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II and worked to transform Turkey into a centralised bourgeois-democratic state. p. 86

54 Scared by the revolution that had broken out, Abdul Hamid II announced the restoration of the 1876 constitution, which was in fact revoked in 1878, when at the Sultan's orders the Turkish Parliament was disbanded. p. 86

55 *L'Humanité*—a daily paper founded by Jean Jaurès in 1904 as the organ of the French Socialist Party. During the First World War of 1914-18 the paper was controlled by the extreme Right wing of the Socialist Party, and its line was that of social-chauvinism. Soon after the split in the Socialist Party at the Tours Congress (December 1920) and the formation of the Communist Party of France, the paper became the organ of the latter. It appears in Paris and is now the central organ of the French Communist Party. p. 89

56 *The butchers of June 1848*—Cavaignac and other French bourgeois leaders who suppressed the revolt of the Paris workers in June 1848 with monstrous ferocity.

Galliffet—the French general who directed the brutal suppression of the workers of Paris, defenders of the Paris Commune in May 1871. p. 89

57 *The International Socialist Bureau* (*I.S.B.*)—the executive body of the Second International established by decision of the Paris Congress held in 1900. From 1905 to 1912 V. I. Lenin was a member of the I.S.B. as representative of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. During the First World War of 1914-18 the I.S.B. took a social-chauvinist stand and became a rallying centre for the opportunist elements of the Socialist parties. p. 95

58 Engels wrote about the sectarian character of British Social-Democracy in his letters to F. A. Sorge dated June 10, 1891, May 12 and November 10, 1894. p. 104

59 The trade union (workers') delegates to the Second All-Russia Congress of Factory Doctors and Representatives of Industry were arrested by order of the tsarist government on April 13 (26), 1911, on the eve of the Congress. p. 107

60 "*The younger brother*"—the people. An expression used in liberal literature in tsarist Russia. p. 108

61 *Brentanoism*—a variety of bourgeois distortion of Marxism, so called after the German bourgeois economist Brentano, an advocate

of "state socialism". He tried to show that social equality could be achieved under capitalism by means of reforms and the alleged "reconciliation" of the interests of the workers and capitalists. p. 111

62 *The British Socialist Party (B.S.P.)* was founded in 1911 in Manchester as a result of the merger of the Social-Democratic Federation and other socialist groups. Among its leaders were Hyndman, Harry Quelch and Tom Mann. The B.S.P. carried on propaganda in the Marxist spirit. However, its small membership and isolation from the masses lent it a somewhat sectarian character.

During the First World War of 1914-18 there were three trends in the Party: social-chauvinist, the Centrist and the internationalist. The social-chauvinist wing headed by Hyndman, being in a minority at the B.S.P. Conference held in April 1916, split away from the Party. Many of the B.S.P. members, however, supported the internationalist trend represented ty John McLean, William Gallacher and others.

In March 1918 the B.S.P. Conference welcomed the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. B.S.P. members played a great part in rallying the British workers in defence of Soviet Russia against the foreign intervention. After the 8th Conference held in April 1919, the Party organisations almost unanimously (by 98 votes to 4) declared for affiliation to the Third International. About the same time the B.S.P. began negotiations with other socialist organisations regarding the foundation of a single Communist Party in Britain. At the first Unity Convention held at the end of July and the beginning of August 1920, the overwhelming majority of the B.S.P. branches merged in the newly founded Communist Party of Great Britain. p. 121

63 See Note 24. p. 123

64 Quoted from a workers' song written by the German poet Georg Herwegh in 1864. p. 129

65 A line seems to be missing in this passage in *Pravda*. The draft resolution analysed by Lenin proposed hanging up posters of the *Daily Herald* as well as of the *Daily Citizen*, which was in the hands of the opportunists, on the premises occupied by Party organisations.

Daily Herald was founded in London in 1912. On a number of issues its policy was close to that of the B.S.P. After the First World War it became for a time the organ of the Labour Party and the T.U.C. The paper is now controlled by a capitalist firm; its policy is supposed to be "favourable" to the labour movement. p. 132

66 Lenin has in mind the statement: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (see Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow, 1969, p. 51). p. 145

67 *The Council of State*—a consultative body in tsarist Russia, whose members were appointed by the tsar. The Council of State consisted mainly of big landlords and tsarist dignitaries. p. 145

[68] *Rech* (Speech) and *Sovremenka*—abbreviation for *Sovremennoye Slovo* (Contemporary Word)—were Cadet newspapers. p. 150

[69] Reference is to the Second International Diplomatic Conference held in 1907 in The Hague. This Conference, like the first Hague Conference (1899), was attended by representatives of the imperialist governments of Britain, tsarist Russia, the U.S.A., Germany, France, etc. The Conference approved a number of international conventions—on the laws and customs of land warfare, on the rights and duties of neutral powers, etc. p. 159

[70] *Kit Kitych* ("kit" is the Russian for "whale")—the nickname of Tit Titych, a rich merchant in A. N. Ostrovsky's play *Shouldering Another's Troubles.* Lenin gives this name to capitalist money-bags.

Guchkov—a big capitalist, leader of the Octobrist Party. p. 164

[71] *Rodichev*—a Russian liberal, member of the Cadet Party. p. 165

[72] This refers to the land reform carried through in Ireland in conformity with the 1903 law. The essence of the reform was that the Irish small tenants bought the land they rented, with money loaned by the state, from the British landlords. The reform resulted in the Irish tenants paying huge sums of money to the landlords. p. 170

[73] Reference is to the article "The British Liberals and Ireland". See pp. 168-170 of this book. p. 171

[74] *The Sozialistische Monatshefte* (The Socialist Monthly)—journal of the opportunists in German Social-Democracy; appeared in Berlin from 1897 to 1933. p. 187

[75] *Nashe Dyelo* (Our Cause)—a monthly magazine of the Menshevik liquidators, published legally in Petrograd from 1915 to 1917 in place of *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn), which was closed in October 1914. The liquidator leadership in Russia was built up around *Nashe Dyelo.* p. 187

[76] *Obshcho Dyelo* adherents (also known as the Shiroki Socialists)—the opportunist, social-chauvinist wing of the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party. They published the magazine *Obshcho Dyelo* (The Common Cause).

Tesnyaki—a revolutionary trend in the Social-Democratic Party of Bulgaria, which, after a split in the Party in 1903, formed an independent Bulgarian Workers' Social-Democratic Party. The founder and leader of the Tesnyaki was Dmitri Blagoev. The Tesnyaki opposed the First World War; in 1919 they joined the Communist International, assuming the name of the Communist Party of Bulgaria. p. 187

[77] In *The Collapse of the Second International* written in May-June 1915, Lenin says on the same point:

"In Britain about three-sevenths of the British Socialist Party are internationalists (66 votes for an internationalist resolution and 84 against it, as shown by the latest counts), while in the opportunist *bloc* (the Labour Party plus the Fabians plus the Independent Labour Party) *less* than one-seventh are internationalists." The figures 66 and 84 given by Lenin apparently refer to the total delegates' votes cast at Divisional Conferences held in February 1915 for and against the internationalist resolution of the Central Hackney branch of the B.S.P. p. 187

78 *The London Conference of Socialists of the Entente Countries* took place on February 14, 1915. It was attended by representatives of the social-chauvinists and of pacifist groups in the Socialist parties of Britain, France and Belgium, and of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries from Russia. The delegates from Britain included the pro-war Labourites Henderson, Clynes, Hodge and Roberts; the I.L.P. leaders Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald and Bruce Glasier; and the B.S.P. leaders (Hyndmanites), Dan Irving and Victor Fisher. Keir Hardie was in the chair.

The Bolsheviks were not invited, but on Lenin's instructions M. M. Litvinov (Maximovich) attended the Conference to read out a declaration of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The declaration demanded that Socialists withdraw from bourgeois governments, completely break with the imperialists, wage a resolute struggle against their imperialist governments and condemn the voting for war credits. The chairman interrupted Litvinov when he was reading the declaration and prevented him from reading it to the end. Litvinov handed the declaration over to the presidium and left the Conference.

The Conference adopted resolutions which, to use Lenin's expression, were merely a screen for social-chauvinism. p. 189

79 Maximovich's declaration is not given in this book. p. 189

80 *The Bund* (the General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia) was founded in 1897, its members in the main being Jewish handicraftsmen of Russia's western provinces. At the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in March 1898, the Bund joined the new Party. However, at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. that took place from July 17 (30) to August 10 (23), 1903, the Bundists advanced the demand that the Bund be recognised as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat. When this demand, revealing the Bund's organisational nationalism, was rejected by the Congress, the Bundists left the Party.

In 1906, following the Fourth (Unity) Congress, the Bund again joined the R.S.D.L.P. The Bundists constantly supported the Mensheviks and waged struggle against the Bolsheviks. Though formally part of the R.S.D.L.P., the Bund was a bourgeois-nationalis type of organisation.

The Organising Committee (*O.C.*)—the leading body of the Mensheviks formed in August 1912 at a conference of Menshevik liquidators and other anti-Party groups and trends. p. 190

81 *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word)—a Menshevik-Trotskyite newspaper. p. 190

82 *Struvism*—bourgeois liberalism, so called after Struve, a Russian bourgeois liberal. p. 202

83 *Lichtstrahlen* (Rays)—a monthly, organ of a group of Left German Social-Democrats (International Socialists of Germany), published under J. Borhardt's editorship. Appeared intermittently in Berlin from 1913 to 1921.

Die Internationale—a journal of Left German Social-Democrats founded by Rosa Luxemburg and Fr. Mehring. Only one issue appeared, in Berlin in April 1915. It resumed publication in Munich in 1922 under the name of *Futurus*. p. 207

[84] *The International Conference of Socialist Women*, convened to discuss the attitude to the war, was held in Berne, March 26-28, 1915. Twenty-five delegates were present—from Britain (four representatives, of whom two were from the I.L.P.), Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, and Poland. Among the Russian delegates were N. K. Krupskaya and Inessa Armand. p. 209

[85] See Note 78. p. 209

[86] *The Tribunists*—a group of Left Social-Democrats in the Dutch Social-Democratic Workers' Party, who began the publication of the newspaper *De Tribune* in 1907. In 1909 the Tribunists were expelled from this Party and organised an independent party (the Social-Democratic Party of Holland), which, while constituting the Left wing of the Dutch working-class movement, was not consistently revolutionary. In 1918 the Tribunists took part in forming the Communist Party of Holland. p. 210

[87] The Zimmerwald Manifesto was adopted at the International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald (Switzerland) in September 1915. Lenin regarded this Conference as the "first step" in developing an international movement against the imperialist war. The Conference was attended by Socialists from eleven European countries, including Russia, Germany, France, Italy. There were no delegates from Britain. The B.S.P. and the I.L.P. appointed delegates to the Conference, but they were refused passports by the British Government.

The Conference adopted a manifesto which denounced the imperialist governments responsible for the outbreak of the world war and condemned the social-chauvinists, though not forcefully enough. The Manifesto was the basis for the so-called Zimmerwald Association.

The B.S.P. Conference in 1916 declared overwhelmingly in support of the Zimmerwald decisions.

The Zimmerwald Left group, formed at the Conference and headed by Lenin, sharply criticised the Conference majority for its Kautskyite position and urged that the Conference decisions should point to the need for a complete break with social-chauvinism and call for mass revolutionary struggle against the imperialist governments.

The Zimmerwald Left elected a Bureau, which continued working after the conclusion of the Conference to consolidate the forces of the revolutionary internationalist groups. p. 211

[88] Lenin quotes from and refers to the letters of Marx to Engels dated June 7, 1866, June 20, 1866, November 2, 1867, and November 30, 1867. p. 214

[89] This is a letter in reply to a leaflet from the Socialist Propaganda League, U.S.A., received by Lenin in November 1915. p. 218

[90] See the letters from Engels to Sorge dated April 29, 1886, and December 7, 1889, and also the letter of Engels to Wischnewetzky

dated December 28, 1886, and to Schluter dated January 11, 1890. p. 220

[91] *The Quadruple Entente*—an imperialist alliance of Britain, France, Russia and Italy. It arose in 1915 after Italy left the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy) and joined the other imperialist alliance, the Triple Entente, which had been formed in 1907. p. 222

[92] *The Chkheidze group*—the Menshevik group in the Fourth Duma (1912-17). p. 223

[93] Lenin is referring to Engels's article "A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891" (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 435). p. 225

[94] *The Basle Manifesto* was adopted at the International Socialist Congress in Basle in November 1912. It was an emergency congress of the Second International convened to protest against the Balkan war that had broken out and the world imperialist war that was being prepared. The Congress adopted a resolution, or manifesto, calling on Socialists in all countries to "prevent the outbreak of war" and declaring that "the proletariat considers it a crime to shoot at its brothers for the sake of the profits of the capitalists, the ambitions of the dynasties, or the secret treaties of the diplomats". Should war break out in spite of all, "Socialists must intervene to achieve its speedy termination and exploit the economic and political crisis created by the war to rouse the people and thereby hasten the collapse of capitalist domination".

When war did break out in July 1914, most of the leaders of the Socialist parties affiliated to the Second International betrayed socialism, renounced the Basle resolution and sided with their imperialist governments. The Russian Bolsheviks led by Lenin, the Liebknecht and Luxemburg group in Germany, John McLean and other internationalists in Britain, and some groups in other Socialist parties remained true to the principles of internationalism and in conformity with the Basle Manifesto called on the workers to fight against their imperialist governments and the imperialist war. p. 226

[95] See Note 87. p. 229

[96] Reference is to G. V. Plekhanov. p. 239

[97] See Note 24. p. 255

[98] Reference is to V. I. Lenin's theses entitled "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," written at the beginning of 1916. p. 256

[99] This refers to *The Theses on Imperialism and National Oppression* published by the Polish Social-Democrats. p. 259

[100] Reference is to V. I. Lenin's theses entitled "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination". p. 261

[101] *V. Ilyin*—a pseudonym of V. I. Lenin. p. 261

[102] See "Author's Preface to the Second Edition" of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* by K. Marx (Marx and Engels,

Selected Works, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, pp. 394-95). p. 267

103 *Manilovism*—sugary, inane tittle-tattle, empty phrase-mongering. Manilov is a character in *Dead Souls*, the work of the Russian writer N. V. Gogol. p. 282

104 *Workers' or labour group* (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft*)—a German Centrist organisation formed in March 1916 by Reichstag deputies who split away from the official Social-Democratic Reichstag group. It formed the core of the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany founded in 1917, which sought to justify the outright social-chauvinists and stood for maintaining unity with them. p. 283

105 *The minoritaires* or *Longuetists*—the minority group in the French Socialist Party formed in 1915. The Longuetists (supporters of the social-reformist Jean Longuet) held Centrist views and pursued a policy of agreement with the social-chauvinists. During the First World War they took a social-pacifist stand. At the French Socialist Party Congress in Tours in December 1920, at which the Left wing was victorious, the Longuetists were in a minority, whereupon they combined with the open reformists in splitting away from the Party and joining the so-called Two-and-a-Half International. When the latter fell to pieces they returned to the Second International. p. 284

106 The manifesto is not given in this book. p. 284

107 *The Internationale group*, which later called itself the Spartacus League, was founded by the German Left Social-Democrats Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin and others at the outset of the First World War. The *Internationale* group played an important part in the history of the German working-class movement. At the national conference of Left Social-Democrats held in January 1916, the group adopted theses on the tasks of international Social-Democracy, drawn up by Rosa Luxemburg. The *Internationale* group conducted revolutionary propaganda among the masses against the imperialist war, exposed the predatory policy of German imperialism, and the treachery of the Social-Democratic leaders. But it was not free from serious errors on cardinal issues of theory and policy: for example, it rejected the principle of self-determination of nations as understood by Marxists (i.e., including the right of secession and the formation of an independent state); it denied the possibility of national liberation wars in the imperialist era and underestimated the role of the revolutionary party, etc. In 1917 the *Internationale* group joined the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, though retaining organisational independence in that Party. After the November 1918 revolution in Germany the group broke away from the "Independents" and in December of the same year founded the Communist Party of Germany. p. 284

108 *Arbeiterpolitik*—a weekly journal published legally from 1916 to 1919 by the Bremen group of Left-wing Social-Democrats. p. 285

109 *The Trade Unionist*—a monthly paper, internationalist in trend, that appeared in London in 1915 and 1916. p. 285

110 *The Socialist Labour Party of America* was formed in 1876 as a result of the merger of the American sections of the First International, the Social-Democratic Labour Party and several other socialist groups in the U.S.A. The majority of the Party members were immigrants. The S.L.P. of America was sectarian in character and never had extensive ties with the proletarian masses. During the First World War the S.L.P. leaned towards internationalism.

The Socialist Party of America—a reformist, opportunist party founded in 1901. During the First World War the Right wing of the Party justified the imperialist war and supported the policy of American imperialism. The Left, revolutionary wing adopted an internationalist position and opposed the war. In 1919 it split away from the S.P. and became the initiator in founding the Communist Party of the U.S.A., of which it constituted the core. Following the split, the S.P. of America turned into a small sectarian organisation. At the beginning of 1957 the S.P. merged with the Social-Democratic Federation to form a new organisation with no more than 5,000 members, called the Socialist Party—Social-Democratic Federation.

The Internationalist—a newspaper, organ of the Socialist Party of America, published by the Socialist Propaganda League in Boston in 1917. p. 285

111 See F. Engels, "A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 432). p. 288

112 See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 99. p. 300

113 *Left Communists*—an opportunist group in the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) formed in 1918 and headed by Bukharin. The Left Communists opposed the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty with Germany, the introduction of one-man management and labour discipline, and the employment of bourgeois specialists in Soviet industry. In his *"Left-Wing" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality* and in other works, V. I. Lenin sharply criticised the Left Communists, revealing their petty-bourgeois nature. p. 304

114 *The Man in a Muffler*—a character in Chekhov's story of the same name, typifying a narrow-minded philistine who is scared of everything new, of every display of initiative. p. 307

115 Reference is to the counter-revolutionary revolt of the Czechoslovak Corps organised by the British and French imperialists and actively supported by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Czechoslovak Corps was formed by the Russian bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917 out of prisoners of war taken during the First World War, and was intended for use in the war against Germany. Following the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, the Russian counter-revolutionaries and British and French imperialists used the counter-revolutionary officers of the Corps to fight the Soviet Government. The revolt began in Chelyabinsk in May 1918. With the aid of the Czechoslovak Corps the counter-revolutionaries seized the Urals, the Volga area and Siberia. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, acting under cover of the Czechoslovak forces, set up a whiteguard-

S.R. government in Samara, and a Siberian whiteguard government in Omsk.

In October 1918 the Red Army liberated the Volga area. The counter-revolutionary Czechoslovak revolt was finally suppressed towards the close of 1919, when Kolchak's armies were routed. p. 308

[116] Reference is to the counter-revolutionary revolt organised by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow on July 6, 1918. It was suppressed within a day. p. 312

[117] *The Dashnaktsutyun Party*—a party of the nationalist Armenian bourgeoisie. In 1918-20 it took part in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviets. p. 312

[118] Reference is to the advancing Turkish troops. p. 313

[119] On October 26 (November 8), 1917, the day after the establishment of Soviet rule in Russia, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, following a report by V. I. Lenin, adopted a Decree on Peace in which the proposal was made to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries that an armistice be concluded and negotiations begun immediately regarding a just democratic peace without annexations or indemnities. The Soviet Government's proposal was rejected by the imperialist states participating in the war. p. 318

[120] *The Brest Peace*—the peace treaty signed in Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 between Soviet Russia and Germany on terms exceedingly onerous for the former. The treaty gave Soviet Russia the respite it needed and enabled it to gather the strength to defeat the combined forces of the Russian counter-revolution and the armed intervention of Britain, France, the U.S.A. and Japan.

After the revolution in Germany (November 1918), the Brest Peace was annulled. p. 319

[121] V. I. Lenin is quoting from N. G. Chernyshevsky's review of H. Ch. Carey's *Letters to the President on the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Union, and Its Effects.* p. 326

[122] This refers to the terms of the Versailles Peace Treaty. p. 331

[123] See Engels's letter to Marx dated October 7, 1858. p. 339

[124] See Marx's letter to Engels dated April 16, 1856. p. 340

[125] *The Berne International*—the name given to the organisation of social-chauvinist and Centrist parties formed at a conference in Berne in February 1919 with a view to re-establishing the Second International. p. 349

[126] *Zubatov*—a colonel of the gendarmerie who at the beginning of the 20th century tried to spread so-called "police socialism" in Russia with the aim of diverting the workers from the revolutionary struggle. Zubatov set up police-promoted, bogus workers' organisations in Moscow and other cities, in which the workers were incited against revolutionaries, and told that the tsar would help them improve their severe economic conditions.

The upsurge of the revolutionary movement swept away these Zubatov organisations. Thus the attempt of the tsarist police to impede the revolutionary movement failed. p. 352

127 *Iskrists*—revolutionary Social-Democrats, supporters of the newspaper *Iskra* founded by Lenin. p. 352

128 What is meant here is the opportunist slogan of trade union "neutrality" towards the political struggle of the working class. As the entire experience of the labour movement has shown, trade union "neutrality" actually means subordinating the trade unions to bourgeois policy. p. 354

129 *Sylvia Pankhurst* took part in the communist movement in Britain after the First World War. In 1919 she wrote a letter to Lenin requesting him to give his opinion about the problem of participation in Parliament. In her letter she described the parties and political groups existing in Britain and gave them the following numeration: 1) Trade unionists and labour politicians of the old type; 2) The Independent Labour Party; 3) The British Socialist Party; 4) The revolutionary industrialists; 5) The Socialist Labour Party; 6) The Socialist Workers' Federation; 7) The South Wales Socialist Society. Lenin, in his reply, adheres to this numeration. The letter appeared in *The Call* of April 22, 1920. p. 361

130 Reference is to the Constituent Congress of the Communist Party of Germany that was held in Berlin from December 30, 1918 to January 1, 1919. Despite the fact that Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg advocated participation in the elections to the National Assembly, the Congress by a majority (62 against 23) adopted the wrong decision to take no part in the election campaign. p. 362

131 *Workers'* (*Works'*) *Committees, Shop Stewards' Committees*—elected bodies of workers set up at factories in Britain during the First World War. They led the famous Clyde strike of February 1915 (directed by the Clyde Workers' Committee), the strike in the engineering industry in May 1917, and others. During 1916 they linked up and formed the National Shop Stewards' and Works' Committee Movement, the objects of which included "the organisation of the workers upon a class basis to prosecute the interests of the working class until the triumph of the workers is assured". After the Great October Socialist Revolution the Shop Stewards' Movement came out in support of Soviet Russia and played an active part in combating the armed intervention against it, organised by the imperialists.

Leading members of the Shop Stewards' Movement, such as Arthur McManus, William Gallacher, Harry Pollitt, and others, took part in founding the Communist Party of Great Britain. p. 363

132 *Independents*—members of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, founded by the Centrists (Kautsky, Haase, etc.) in April 1917. In October 1920, at their congress in Halle, a split took place among the Independents, the Left wing joining the Communist Party of Germany (in December) and the Right-wing elements forming a separate party, which assumed the old name

of Independent Social-Democratic Party and existed until 1922. p. 368

[133] This refers to the leaflets and appeals of the Soviet Government issued in English and distributed among the British and American interventionist troops. From these leaflets the British and American soldiers learned the truth about Soviet Russia and the aims of the intervention. Here is the concluding part of a leaflet, an appeal to all British troops in the Allied Army, entitled "Why Have You Come to Murmansk?":

"You will be fighting not against enemies but against working people like yourself.

"For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown off the rule of the tsar, of landlords and of capitalists. But we have still tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone.

"We ask you, are you going to help to crush us? To help to give Russia back to the landlords, the capitalists and the tsar?

"You in your Trade Unions have been fighting capitalists, you know what it is.

"*Comrades*!

"*Englishmen*!

"*You who pride yourselves on your love of liberty*!

"*Comrades*! *Descendants of the great Chartists*! You who have always expressed sympathy with the Russian revolution, are you going to assist in crushing the first effort of working people to free themselves from their sweaters and exploiters?

"Remember this! If the Russian revolution is crushed, then the power of the capitalists will be enormously strengthened in every country, and the fight for economic freedom will be put back for a hundred years.

"*N. Lenin*, Pres. Council of People's Commissaries.

"*G. Tchitcherine*, People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs." p. 379

[134] In November 1918 the French fleet entered the Black Sea and effected a landing at Odessa. In April 1919 a mutiny took place among the sailors of the fleet, who demanded that the war against Soviet Russia be stopped. The mutiny was suppressed and its leaders were sentenced to penal servitude. The French command, however, had to withdraw the ships. p. 379

[135] This is the beginning of an unfinished article by Lenin. The views expressed in it are dealt with in greater detail in his *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder*. p. 381

[136] See F. Engels's article "Programme of the Blanquist Commune Emigrants". p. 382

[137] Lenin wrote *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* in April 1920 and the Appendix on May 12, 1920. The pamphlet appeared in Russian on June 8-10, 1920, and almost simultaneously, in July, German, French and English editions were published. It was circulated to all the delegates of the Second Congress of

the Communist International held in Moscow from July 19 to August 7, 1920.

The munuscript of "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*, which is in the possession of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., bears the sub-title: "An Attempt to Conduct a Popular Discussion on Marxist Strategy and Tactics", and has the following dedication: "I dedicate this article to the most honourable Mr. Lloyd George in token of gratitude for his speech of March 18, 1920, which is almost Marxist and at any rate extremely useful for the Communists and Bolsheviks of the whole world."

Neither the sub-title nor the dedication appeared in the editions of this work published in Lenin's lifetime.

Lloyd George's speech referred to in the dedication was made at a meeting of the Liberal group in the House of Commons. In this speech Lloyd George showed the need for close contact between the Liberals and the Conservatives in face of the growing influence of socialist ideas among British workers. p. 386

138 Shortly after the outbreak of the First World War of 1914-18 all the Bolshevik deputies to the Duma were arrested and sentenced to penal servitude for their exposure of the tsarist government's predatory aims in the war from the Duma rostrum and revolutionary propaganda among the people. p. 388

139 Lenin is referring here to the pamphlet of the German "Lefts", *The Split in the Communist Party of Germany*, from which he quoted in Chapter V of his "*Left-Wing*" *Communism—an Infantile Disorder*. p. 390

140 *Industrial Workers of the World* (*I.W.W.*)—an American workers' organisation founded in 1905. An active part in founding the I.W.W. was played by such working-class leaders as Daniel de Leon, Eugene Debs, and Bill Heywood. It played a big part in the American trade union movement. During the First World War of 1914-18 the I.W.W. led a number of mass anti-war actions of the American working class, exposed the policy of the reactionary leaders of the American Federation of Labour and Right-wing socialists. Some of the I.W.W. leaders, including Bill Heywood, later joined the Communist Party of the U.S.A. At the same time, the activity of the I.W.W. bore marked anarcho-syndicalist features. It rejected the proletariat's political struggle, denied the leading role of the Party and the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and refused to carry on work among the members of the reactionary trade unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labour. Subsequently the I.W.W. degenerated into a sectarian group exerting no influence on the workers. p. 391

141 *The Socialist Labour Party* in Britain (*S.L.P.*) was founded in 1903 by a group of Left-wing Social-Democrats who had split away from the Social-Democratic Federation. On a number of issues their position was close to that of the anarcho-syndicalists. During the First World War, the S.L.P. pursued an internationalist policy. S.L.P.-ers took part in the Shop Stewards' Movement, and were members of the Clyde Workers' Committee, which directed

the famous strike on the Clyde in 1915. The S.L.P. published and distributed Marxist literature. A group of leading S.L.P. members, including Arthur McManus and Tom Bell, participated in the negotiations to form a Communist Party in Britain, and out of S.L.P. branches set up Communist Unity Groups, which merged to form the Communist Party in August 1920.

The South Wales Socialist Society was a small group, mainly of South Wales miners. In 1920 it was replaced by a broader organisation, the South Wales Communist Council, which became part of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The Workers' Socialist Federation, founded in May 1918, was a small organisation that developed from the Women's Suffrage League. The members of the W.S.F. were mainly women. In June 1919 it adopted the name of Communist Party, British Section of the Third International (B.S.T.I.).

The B.S.T.I. united with the Communist Party of Great Britain at the Unity Convention in January 1921. p. 391

142 *Letter to the British Workers* was published on June 17, 1920, in the B.S.P. weekly *The Call* and then in the Workers' Socialist Federation weekly *The Workers' Dreadnought*, the Labour paper *The Daily Herald*, the Liberal *Manchester Guardian*, and in other papers. p. 417

143 The delegation referred to was sent to Soviet Russia following a decision of a special meeting of the T.U.C. held in December 1919, and included representatives both of the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee and of the Labour Party E.C. p. 417

144 The spring of 1920 saw the beginning of the so-called third campaign of the Entente against Soviet Russia. The Anglo-French imperialists succeeded in persuading the bourgeois government of Poland to start war on Soviet Russia. In April 1920 Polish troops invaded the Ukraine and in May captured Kiev. Simultaneously the tsarist general Wrangel launched an offensive from the Crimea. Though the British and French governments lavishly supplied Poland and Wrangel with arms, money and all they needed, the Red Army was completely victorious by the autumn of 1920. It liberated all the towns seized by whiteguard Poles, entered Polish territory and approached Warsaw. The Polish Government was compelled in October 1920 to sign a preliminary peace treaty. Wrangel's troops were driven out of the Crimea. p. 418

145 *Reply to a Letter from the Joint Provisional Committee for the Communist Party of Britain* was broadcasted and published in the B.S.P. paper *The Call* on July 22, 1920. The Reply was read at the British Communist Unity Convention held on July 31-August 1, 1920. p. 427

146 The so-called Two-and-a-Half International was founded in Vienna in February 1921 at a conference of Centrist parties and groups which, under pressure from the revolutionary-minded masses, temporarily seceded from the Second International. The parties concerned rejoined the Second International in 1923. p. 435

147 Reference is to the "Fourteen Points" of the programme published by the U.S. President Wilson in January 1918 as a basis for the conclusion of peace between the Entente and the Austro-German coalition.

Wilson's "Fourteen Points" were aimed at undermining the influence exerted on the popular masses of the belligerent countries by the Decree on Peace adopted on Lenin's report by the Second Congress of Soviets on October 26 (November 8), 1917, which proposed to the peoples and governments of these countries that peace without annexations and indemnities be immediately concluded.

Wilson's "Fourteen Points" suggested the restriction of armaments, freedom of the seas, formation of a League of Nations, etc. Most of them were not realised. p. 435

148 This interview was published in the Swiss newspaper *Berner Tagwacht* on July 21, 1920. The name of the interviewing journalist was not given. p. 458

149 This refers to a memorandum of the British Government handed, together with the draft of a Russo-British trade agreement, to L. B. Krasin in London on July 1, 1920. p. 458

150 The question of the Communist Party's affiliation to the Labour Party was settled following the discussion of Lenin's theses on the fundamental tasks of the Communist International at the closing session of the Second Congress on August 6, 1920. After Lenin's speech, the Congress by a majority (of 58, with 24 against and 2 abstentions) declared in favour of affiliation. The C.P.G.B.'s subsequent application for affiliation was, however, rejected by the Labour Party leaders. p. 460

151 On May 10, 1920, soon after bourgeois Poland, on orders from the Entente, attacked Soviet Russia, London dockers refused to load the s.s. *Jolly George* with war materials for Poland. The strike was supported by the masses of British workers. In August 1920 the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress convened an emergency national conference. A resolution was adopted by the Conference, warning the Government that "the whole industrial power of the organised workers will be used to defeat this war", i.e., the war on Russia.

The Conference set up a National Council of Action, and soon afterwards 350 local Councils of Action were organised.

Several days before the opening of the Conference the British Prime Minister Lloyd George demanded that the Red Army should stop its offensive on the Polish front, and threatened that the British navy would be brought into action. The powerful movement of the British workers, however, forced the British Government to reconsider its bellicose plans. Winston Churchill, one of the main organisers of the intervention against Soviet Russia, has written in his memoirs:

"The British Labour Party had developed a violent agitation against any British assistance being given to Poland.... Councils of Action were being formed in many parts of Britain. Nowhere among the public was there the slightest comprehension of the evils which would follow a Polish collapse. Under these pressures Mr. Lloyd George was constrained to advise the Polish Government that the Russian terms 'do no violence to the ethnographical frontiers of Poland as an independent state', and that if they were rejected, the British Government could not take any action against Russia." p. 466

152 Lenin is referring to the earlier part of his speech, where he says: "You will of course remember that last April, when the Polish offensive had not yet begun, the line of the front lay farther eastward, in many places very much farther eastward, than at present. As it then was, the line left Minsk in Polish hands; the Poles held the whole of Byelorussia. Not only the Council of People's Commissars, but the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee itself—the highest body in the R.S.F.S.R.—solemnly declared in a manifesto to the Polish people that they proposed peace, and rejected the idea of deciding by force of arms the fate of Byelorussia, which had never been Polish, and whose peasant population had long suffered from the Polish landowners and did not regard themselves as Poles. Nevertheless, we declared in the most official and solemn terms that we proposed peace on the basis of the then existing line, since we set so high a value on the workers who would have to lay down their lives in case of war that we considered no concessions too important by comparison". p. 468

153 Lenin's talk with William Paul, a founding member of the Communist Party of Britain, was recorded by Paul himself. An article was published in *The Communist*, journal of the British Communist Party, on December 2, 1920. p. 471

154 In October 1920 a preliminary peace was concluded with Poland in Riga. A peace treaty between Poland and Soviet Russia was signed in March 1921. p. 474

155 The Soviet Government concluded a trade agreement with Britain on March 16, 1921. p. 476

156 Britain was contemplating, in agreement with the Menshevik government of Georgia, an occupation of Batum by British troops. On November 16, 1920, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Georgi Chicherin sent a Note to the Georgian government and a wireless message to British Foreign Secretary Curzon. He pointed out that the Soviet Government would regard an occupation of Batum as an attempt to precipitate another war in the Caucasus and create a direct threat to the Soviet Republic. He drew attention to the grave consequences this would entail and emphasised that the responsibility for them would rest wholly with the occupationists and their abettors. p. 476

157 This decision was adopted by the Political Bureau of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee on December 4, 1920. p. 477

158 This refers to the Third Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in June and July 1921. p. 487

159 Colonel F. R. MacDonald, an organiser of and participant in various industrial and financial enterprises, came to the Soviet Union apparently on a mission for Lloyd George and wrote a letter of

application to V. I. Lenin. He was interested in forestry and agricultural concessions, and also in obtaining a concession for the exploitation of separate sections of the railways and for the repair of railway engines.

The envelope containing MacDonald's letter bears an inscription by V. I. Lenin: "To Comrades Litvinov and Chicherin. My letter to them is on the back of the letter in the envelope. Comrade secretary, please ensure that it is delivered and answered promptly, the answer to be sent to me for signing. 2/II. *Lenin.*"

On the basis of Lenin's draft M. M. Litvinov drew up an answer to MacDonald, which was sent to the latter, having been signed by Lenin's secretary, L. A. Fotieva, on February 6, 1922.

No practical results came of the negotiations with MacDonald. p. 490

160 This document is a reply to the letter from G. V. Chicherin, in which the latter asked V. I. Lenin to send an article for the fifth issue of *The Manchester Guardian* Supplement, which was to be devoted exclusively to Russia.

By decision of the Politbureau of the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee of March 8, 1922, the editing of Russian articles for *The Manchester Guardian* was entrusted to G. V. Chicherin and Karl Radek. p. 492

161 Concerning the agreement with Urquhart see Note 163. p. 493

162 Edouard Herriot, a prominent French statesman, leader of the Radical Socialist Party, visited Soviet Russia and had talks in Moscow with Soviet leaders in September 1922. His visit played a big part in developing commercial and other ties between France and the Soviet Union. p. 494

163 The big British industrialist Leslie Urquhart, who owned numerous enterprises in pre-revolutionary Russia, negotiated with the Soviet Government in 1922 about the possibility of working his former properties as a concession. A draft agreement was proposed but was turned down by the Council of People's Commissars. p. 495

164 Reference is to the conference on the Near East which was in preparation and was held later in Lausanne (November 1922-July 1923).

Convened on the initiative of Britain, France and Italy, it was attended also by Japan, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey; the U.S.A. was represented by observers.

Soviet Russia was to take part in the conference, too, but on October 14, 1922, the British Government declared that Russia would not participate in the discussion of all the issues but only in that of the Straits (the Dardanelles and the Bosporus).

The Soviet delegation proposed complete freedom for mercantile shipping in the Bosporus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles, on the understanding that both in peace- and war-time the Dardanelles and the Bosporus would be closed to all naval craft and military aircraft, with the exception of those of Turkey. The proposal of the Soviet delegation was rejected, and the British plan providing for the free passage of naval craft was adopted. p. 496

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